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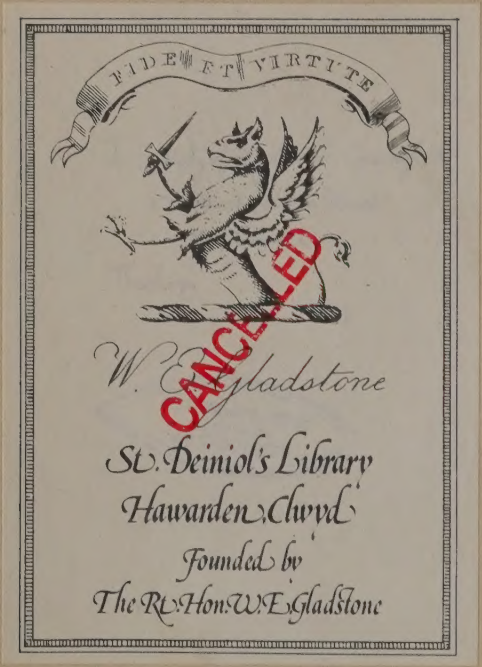
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THE TESTING OF CHURCH PRINCIPLES

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THE TESTING OF CHURCH PRINCIPLES

BY OLIVER CHASE QUICK

AUTHOR OF
"ESSAYS IN ORTHODOXY"
AND "MODERN PHILOSOPHY AND
THE INCARNATION"

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.
1919

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FOREWORD

I CANNOT allow this little book to appear without offering some apology for resting so many broad generalizations and controversial conclusions upon such a very slender groundwork of argument and evidence. A friend, who kindly read my manuscript, remarked that my method suggested to him an infantry attack made without artillery preparation upon a series of strongly fortified positions. The comparison seems to me a very fair one. My excuse must be that this is a critical hour in the life of the Church of England. Decisions must shortly be taken which will affect the whole course of her future development; for it is a time when even a postponement of decision will itself be decisive. I feel, therefore, that any tiny contribution I may have to make towards the Church's common stock of counsel ought to be offered without delay. I accept the risk that my haste may have betrayed me into some inaccuracies as to fact and into some falsely assured and ill-considered judgments. I have lacked leisure to develop and support my main theses as I should have wished. But there is this advantage in a rapid and cursory survey of a wide range of subject-matter, that, if it be not on the whole misleading, it may help us, even more than a thorough examination, to view the situation as a whole and to see the various problems which confront us in their connexion with one another. It is precisely this need

for whole views which I have chiefly desired to emphasize. Whether the particular opinions here so curtly stated are right or wrong, they can make no pretence to originality. My main purpose will have been achieved if I have succeeded in pointing the moral that particular reforms in the Church should be undertaken no longer as concessions to popular demands or as means of reaching a *modus vivendi* between antagonistic parties, but as steps towards a clearly apprehended and coherent ideal of what English Churchmanship ought to stand for. The conception of Anglican principles here sketched may be ill-balanced or confused; but that we should all have some clear and common conception of Anglican principles to guide our action in reform seems to me an imperative necessity which it will be simply fatal to ignore.

The general debt which I owe to Bishop Gore's writings for my main argument will no doubt be obvious to the reader. I desire here gratefully to acknowledge it, without of course in any way seeking to claim Bishop Gore's authority for my conclusions.

January 1, 1919.

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INTRODUCTION

THE PROBLEM OF AUTHORITY

UNDOUBTEDLY at the present moment the real centre of religious interest is the possibility of reunion. It is perhaps an inevitable irony that reunion should be the centre, not of interest only, but also of dispute. We are in fact confronted by the paradox that two different schools of thought, both equally zealous for religious unity, seek it along diametrically opposite lines, the one through the weakening, the other through the firmer establishment of ecclesiastical authority. The one school makes much of those cases in which the exclusiveness of authority has been most strongly emphasized, from the Pope's treatment of Galileo to the Bishop of Zanzibar's attitude towards the Kikuyu Conference. In the present war the adherents of this school point their moral by dwelling on the informal fellowship of the trenches, and by insisting that this inspiring power must be captured for the service of religion at any cost of mere orthodoxy. The Student in Arms is perhaps the witness they most often cite. The other school lays stress on the power which the mediæval Church possessed of inculcating the obligations of membership. They take their military text from the part played by discipline, or rather by defined organization, in the comradeship of arms. They constantly wax angry and sarcastic at the total failure of Angli-

canism to provide a clear body of teaching, both in belief and practice, which might serve as a resource in trouble and as a guide in bewilderment.

Thus, while half our prophets demand more elasticity of system, the other half call for greater definiteness, as the one great need for achieving the effective unity which they all so ardently desire. The impartial observer will conclude that there must be right on both sides, and that the whole controversy points to the duty of examining afresh the foundations on which Church authority rests, in the hope of discovering some principle which may serve as a basis for reconciliation.

Let us examine rather more closely the two attitudes towards authority which we have just indicated. The demand for relaxation unites in a formidable alliance the popular sentiment of the masses with the far more considered and articulate doctrine of the intellectual Modernists. The popular mind is simply impatient of our denominational divisions. "You are all going the same way," it is always telling us. "Why cannot you recognize the fact and help each other along it, instead of quarrelling or hair-splitting over the exact degree of co-operation which is permissible?" And since the responsibility for the seeming hesitation rests, primarily at any rate, with the official representatives of the Church of England, it is the Bishops' failure to make a bold departure from the ecclesiastical traditions of the past which forms the leading theme of the popular attack. The persistent caution in regard to joint communions, even in face of the new spirit of fellowship which the war has produced, is particularly obnoxious to a large mass of not very highly instructed opinion among the laity. Meanwhile the intellectual Modernists are more immediately concerned to put an end to the disastrous and apparently inevitable

conflict always being waged between the traditional faith of the Creeds and the modern discoveries and speculations which seem to make the old faith impossible to accept. For the Modernist there seems to be only one right and one wrong in this perennial controversy—the right of Galileo against the Pope, of Darwin against the old view of Biblical inspiration, of the higher critic against the old-fashioned Biblical scholarship. He is most keenly anxious that Church authority should not continue simply to act as an obstacle to fresh adventures on the path of knowledge. He is aware that much of the most genuinely religious thinking of the time cannot be brought within the four corners of any orthodox profession, and while the fate of religion itself trembles in the balance, the one hope seems to lie in uniting all those who desire to be on its side, no matter how divergent their theological and ecclesiastical opinions may be. This unity can only be achieved, if tests of orthodoxy are once for all abandoned, and the search for truth be left as the one bond of the fellowship of faith. Surely, if we have faith in truth at all, we can trust her to be her own champion.

From somewhat different premises, therefore, the ordinary man and the Modernist reach the same conclusion—that if only the stiffness of ecclesiastical authority were relaxed, the Church would find a broader and surer basis in the fellowship of all those who desire to love God and their neighbour and to follow wherever truth may lead. This is the religion of Him who commanded men to love one another, and whose severest condemnations were reserved for the orthodox theologians of His day. All further tests of membership are mere devices of a discipleship too cowardly to follow the authentic footsteps of its Master.

One sometimes wonders whether those who reason thus ever realize how very small has been the part actually played by ecclesiastical authority in English religion of the last few decades. Certainly the Bishops have refrained from sanctioning any habitual practice of intercommunion between members of the English Church and those of other religious bodies. Certainly they have maintained, and occasionally exercised, their right to refuse ordination to those who accept only in an allegorical sense facts stated in the Creed. Yet even among the accredited teachers of the Church of England the most widely divergent opinions are freely expressed on this very subject, as well as on others equally fundamental. And if even the comprehensiveness of Anglicanism be not large enough, the wide toleration of the State provides the ordinary man with an unlimited choice of religious societies ranging from the cold rationalism of the Unitarian to the mystical eccentricities of the Theosophist. Almost every conceivable shade of religious opinion claims its adherents and exercises its propaganda without let or hindrance. In result the ecclesiastical authority wielded by the officers of the National Church has already been so far weakened that we at least have excellent data for prophesying the effect of a still further relaxation. Judging from facts, it seems at least doubtful whether that effect would bring us to anything like the ideal fellowship of mutual service in the pursuit of truth which Liberal enthusiasts would have us expect. We are, in fact, invited to declare that there is no definable body of theological truth, no definable rule of religious practice, which can be enjoined upon all as the authoritative and necessary teaching of the Church of Christ. No doubt, if this were once admitted, the Biblical critic and the Modernist theologian could put forth their

theories without risk of suffering the only penalty they now incur—the loss of the right to teach in the Church's name. No doubt, again, little difference would be felt by those who find in their own experience such a sure guide on all matters of faith and conduct that they are in no need of any other authority to instruct them. But what of the plain man? He would only be confirmed in the one dogma to which even at present he so tenaciously clings—viz. that all religious beliefs and practices are merely matters of taste to be determined by the inclination or fancy of the individual. The article of faith most widely held in England to-day is that a man's religious belief and practice are purely his own concern, and that whatever form of either he happens to like most is therefore for him the best. Yet this attitude of mind is as far removed as anything could be from the glorious independent venture after truth and righteousness, which the Liberal bids us encourage by removing the sign-posts of directing authority. The vaunted tolerance, which is simply content to declare that no one has a right to say what is good for any one else, is simply a transparent, if novel, disguise for the deadly self-satisfaction of the Pharisee. The voice of authority is at least a challenge to the complacent broad-mindedness of the ordinary man. Forbid the challenge to be uttered, and you silence the only call which might possibly have stirred him to effort and struggle in the service of God.

It appears, therefore, that there is more sound reason than is commonly supposed on the side of those who demand, not a relaxation of rules, but a firmer insistence upon "definite Church teaching," as the first step in the reconstruction of the Catholic fellowship. The ecclesiastical Conservatives have some ground for their

complaint that the Liberals ignore the plain duty of the Church to teach clearly certain truths of faith and rules of practice, and it does not appear that the omission of the duty is likely to bring us any nearer to that strenuousness of individual and corporate effort which is what religious freedom ought to mean. The common people heard our Lord gladly, we are told, because He taught with authority, and the pathetic eagerness of some sections of the public to be bluffed by any self-confident charlatan who possesses exclusive information about the spiritual world, does seem to show that the ordinary man needs and is ready to respond to the stimulus of an authoritative message. In times like these, however slight the evidence of religious revival, this need is undoubtedly emphasized and the readiness quickened. On the lips of many there trembles the still unuttered question, "What must I do to be saved?" and unless we can return a clear and all-embracing answer with the full force of a divine sanction, we shall have no right to complain if the hesitating questioners turn elsewhere for guidance.

Unluckily, the partisans of definiteness are apt to forget that the highest aims of education require very much more than clearness and completeness in the instruction given. The problem is not merely how to satisfy, but how to stir to further effort the inquiring mind and the perplexed conscience. We need not simply to return plain answers to plain questions, but to enable the questioners to use their own faculties to answer themselves. We desire to produce in our people, not a mere reliance upon external support, but a free and independent endeavour to grapple with their own difficulties. There is all the difference in the world between fastening a plant securely to a stick, and giving it strength to grow firmly on its own roots. It would

only be a further confession of the Church's impotence if her authority were used as an external prop rather than as a means of nourishing a vigorous inward life. Here exactly lies the ever-present danger of the definiteness which delights in plain answers to plain questions. It may be that many are well content to accept their beliefs simply at second-hand, and to conform their practice to a set of explicitly stated rules. It by no means follows that they should be allowed to do so. We must be constantly on the watch lest our "teaching with authority" resemble that of those very Scribes from which our Lord's was most conspicuously different.

The opposite errors into which both the assailants and the upholders of authority are so easily led suggest the extreme difficulty of using authority without abusing it; yet the solution of our problem seems to lie in maintaining, if that be possible, a clear distinction between use and abuse. The foregoing discussion has already roughly indicated the abstract formula in which this distinction may be expressed. Authority is used rightly as a stimulus and encouragement to effort, wrongly as a substitute therefor; rightly as a means of guiding independent enterprise, wrongly as a prop on which indolence may lean. Is it possible that such a naïve and obvious suggestion may really provide a criterion which we can apply to the use of authority in the past, or a guiding principle whereby we may reform its operation in the future?

PART I

PAST AND PRESENT

CHAPTER I

AUTHORITY IN FAITH

§ 1. Dogma and the Mystery of Truth

In faith it is the false use of authority which leads men to postulate formal infallibility, whether in human utterances or documents. By the postulate of "formal infallibility" I mean the assertion that certain forms of words are guaranteed as absolutely true, the word "absolutely" being used in the strict or philosophic sense. The whole claim to formal infallibility springs from the radical reluctance of the human mind to take the risks and make the effort required by that open-minded inquiry which is the only path to knowledge. It has its roots in the persistent desire of mankind to be told the truth, rather than to impose upon itself the arduous duty of finding it out. The mind desires to be assured, and will not pay the price whereby alone true assurance may be won. It treats divine revelation, not as the inspiration and the reward for the use of its own faculties, but as a substitute for their fullest exercise. And as infallibility has its source in indolence, so by a poetic justice its issue is the bitterest form of conflict. The mediæval claim of the Papacy led to the horrors of the Inquisition, the claim made by Evangelical orthodoxy on behalf of the Bible led to the controversy against followers of Darwin and Huxley—legacies of hatred and misunderstanding which

have not yet ceased to darken the counsels of theology and science, and to confound their speech. Yet, as we have seen, the discrediting of all authority in faith merely encourages indolence in a subtler and more deadly form. He who would lay aside all the burden of his perplexity by a blind act of trust in an infallible formula, is no more indolent than he who feels no burden at all because he is content to be led by his tastes or fancies and will not admit the claim of any truth beyond them. Can we not arrive at any method of authority in faith, which will allow it to operate as the real stimulus and guide required by the human mind in the search for truth? Can we indicate any possible reconciliation between traditional faith and modern thought, which would enable each to make its contribution to the truth without driving the other to become its sworn antagonist?

Perhaps the Bible may help us with its presentation of the Gospel, not as a delivered formula, but as a revealed mystery. What is a mystery? Clearly it is something which cannot be completely formulated or explained. The truth that 2 plus 2 equals 4 is not mysterious, because its meaning is completely formulated by the symbols which express it. The truth that the angles at the base of an isosceles triangle are equal is not mysterious, because the reasons why it must be so can be stated with complete adequacy. On the other hand, mystery belongs only to that which has real existence and an apprehensible (though not comprehensible) meaning. A centaur which is merely a figment of the mind is obviously not so mysterious as a really existing centaur would be. Indeed, the commonest animal which really lives, is a much greater mystery than the wildest product of a drug-distorted imagination. Again, the formula for the square root of

— 1 and the nonsense rhymes of Lear are not genuinely mysterious, because they have so very little meaning. Such mysteriousness as they possess lies in the fact that they do seem to mean something, though it is impossible to say exactly what it is. But, plainly, mere nonsense cannot be mysterious.

To attempt a definition, mystery is the word by which we denote the inexplicability of that which is real, the inexpressibility in language of that which is true, the overflowing of meaning over the forms of speech wherein we strive to convey it. Nothing unreal in fact, false in statement, or merely vague or shadowy in meaning is really mysterious. Mystery belongs to things so intensely real, statements so intimately true, meanings so profoundly significant, that thought and speech are overwhelmed in the attempt to account for, to articulate, and to define them. The fact of life, reflections about the inner workings of personality, the message of great music, are all essentially mysterious, not because their reality and truth are in doubt or their meaning vague, but because their reality, truth, and meaning overpower the attempt to express them.

This inexpressibility of the mysterious is not, however, absolute, but relative. Everything significant is up to a point susceptible of expression; that which cannot at all be expressed is without meaning except perhaps for the individual to whom it has come as a direct experience. Again, all significance may be assumed to be potentially capable of complete expression; it is only relatively inexpressible because the means of expression at our command are inadequate to deal with it. Very likely there is meaning for which finite minds can never find adequate language; yet since finite minds within our experience are always capable of growth, and therefore of enlarging the means

of expression within their reach, they will always be capable of expressing with progressive completeness meanings which now transcend their powers. To repeat, mystery is constituted by the overflowing of the significance of the real over the channels of expression in which we try to convey it. The greater the overflow, the greater the mystery. Yet the significance must be partially conveyable by expression, if the reality is to be mysterious for more than a single individual; and the significance will always be capable of more perfect expression, as means of expressing it improve, although the means will never be completely adequate so long as the mystery remains.

The greatest mystery known to the human mind is God. He is the most fully real and the most intimately significant of all beings, and therefore in the idea of God the overflow of significance over expression is greatest. For this reason His supreme revelation of Himself was not given in the language of words at all, not even through the struggling, inspired utterance of the prophet. God's Word became flesh. His self-expression took the form of a human life, at once more luminously simple to the soul and more profoundly baffling to the language of conceptual thought than any other mode whereby the Almighty has communicated His Name to men. The revelation of Jesus Christ, therefore, just because it has shown forth in such abundant fullness the nature of the Godhead, and thereby so utterly confounded the power of language to express it, has immeasurably increased for man the mysteriousness of the Divine Being. Yet the mystery of God's Epiphany in Christ, just because it means so much, must be capable of true, though partial and imperfect, presentation in language, and it should challenge and stimulate all the varied powers of the

mind to make progressively more perfect the presentation which it is their duty to attempt. It is the task of the mind to explicate and to articulate ever more completely the system of reality which is our world; and since the omnipresence of the Divine Being permeates the whole, every fresh discovery, all new knowledge which the mind achieves, must serve to give some better expression to some aspect of the mystery of God. The process of explicating the meaning of God's nature is, so far as we can tell, infinite; but it is the highest responsibility and glory of man's mind to press ever toward the mark, and the attempt to achieve one step further along the road is the true adventure and romance of "modern thought" in every age.

Yet there is one essential condition to be fulfilled, if the adventure is to be rightly directed, and the effort which it involves is to bring forth its fullest fruit. The condition is simple. The fact of the mystery must be preserved and kept under attention; otherwise the mind will forget it, and give up its search in the indolence which rests satisfied with a partial accomplishment; or else it will wander off after seeming mysteries, will-o'-the-wisps which leave it bogged in bewilderment or self-satisfaction, instead of following the steady light of the truth, which brings ever fresh and more spacious horizons into view. The endless journey must have some unity of direction, if it is to be a progress of penetration into the real, and not an aimless running hither and thither after delusive phantoms. If, as the Christian believes, the life of Jesus Christ be the revealed mystery of God, to that life we must look to supply the guiding light.

Here, then, we find the appointed function of traditional faith, of formulated dogma. It is not to explain

the nature of God's being; that would be to remove the mystery and with it the spur to further progress in knowledge. It is not even directly to interpret God's self-revelation in terms of the human intellect; that would be to usurp the function of modern thought, and to take from free speculation the task which it is its arduous duty and high privilege to fulfil. The purpose of authoritative tradition is simply to express so much of the mystery as will serve to keep its existence before the modern mind and to direct the efforts of that mind towards interpreting it further. It is thus that traditional faith and modern thought become, not mutually exclusive, but mutually complementary, not enemies, but allies.

To adopt a different metaphor, the Christian revelation, regarded from the point of view of truth, is still a treasure hid in a field. Dogma does not display the treasure, it marks out the boundaries of the field, and thereby continually shows modern thought where to dig, if it would find an ever more abundant variety of riches. From secular philosophy and science modern thought should receive a constantly improving equipment for its work. But if it ignores the limits which dogma sets, then the warning of authority is clear, that what it seems to discover will be sham metal which must be prevented from debasing the currency of Christian language.

The original Gospel of the Church consisted in the Incarnation and the Atonement conceived, not as theological doctrines, but as evangelical facts. The whole Christian message hinged upon the idea that Jesus Christ was more than a man who had taught certain infallible truths about God and laid down certain infallible rules for human conduct. The Gospel was constituted by the fact that in Christ God

and man were one, and that Christ had left His own Spirit in the world to assist men to be lifted up into that living communion which His own life had created. Thus, as is plainly seen in the Epistles, the whole Gospel started from the fact of Christ's risen humanity, not from mere teaching as to the relation between God and man.

Therefore the life of Christ suggested to His Church from the beginning just the ideal type of religious authority for which we are searching. If the essence of the Christian message had been that Jesus had told men what to believe and showed them what to do, then the authority of His Church would have been of the kind which seeks to save men the trouble of working out their truth and their righteousness for themselves. But because the first emphasis of the Gospel lay, not on what Christ taught as a faith or did as an example, but simply on the fact of His life as the exaltation of manhood to God and on the coming of His Spirit into man's heart, the Gospel gave to man, not an exact truth to be believed or a clear-cut rule to be followed, but rather a problem to be attempted and an ideal to be striven after in the strength of a divine power working in man himself. Doubtless the Gospel presents the absolute truth of God's Nature and of man's relation to Him; that is, it presents a truth so true that no human statements are quite adequate for its expression, and the inadequacy of human statement constitutes the intellectual problem. Even Christ's own statements about God, though the truest possible in the circumstances in which they were uttered, are not, as statements, *absolutely* true; for no statement formulated in human language can be. Therefore it is true that Christ taught the truth, but it is truer that Christ is the truth; for His whole life,

not His words only, is the epiphany wherein the absolute truth stands revealed. In a word, the life of Christ was an authoritative mystery, and the mystery was made by the fact that in Christ's life the exaltation of common manhood to the right hand of God had been achieved. Apart from this fact there was no mystery, no Gospel, no salvation.

Had it not been for heresy, theological dogma would never have been needed. The Incarnation and the Atonement would have remained evangelical facts. Each successive age would have employed its modern thought to explicate a little further the meaning of the mystery which they enshrined, but no further formulation by authority would have been called for. Unfortunately, the heretics could not be content with this task—or rather, they could not rise to the height of the mental effort which it demanded. The heretical-ness of their theories lay precisely in this : that, instead of facing the problem of the mystery, they denied or explained away the facts on which it rested. Thus the Arian, impairing the fullness of our Lord's deity, made Him out to be a demi-god, and thereby brought His person much more readily within the comprehension of popular heathenism. The Gnostic meanwhile, by making our Lord's physical manhood a matter of appearance only, accommodated Christianity to that Oriental mysticism wherein the cultivated few found a path of spiritual salvation barred to the uninitiate throng. Both doctrines made the Gospel easier for a certain class to accept at the expense of removing the fact of the unity of perfect Godhead with complete manhood, which constituted the mystery of a catholic salvation. The Church was compelled to safeguard her children against such teaching, and the result was the dogmatic theology authorized in the

Catholic Creeds. Thus the doctrine of the Incarnation took dogmatic-theological form in the homoousion of the Nicene Creed and the more elaborate articles of the Athanasian. It was expressed in propositions couched partly in the language of Aristotelian philosophy, but this was due, not to any desire to give final philosophic expression to what was confessed to be inexpressible, but to the fact that such formulations were the only ones which the heretics felt bound to reject. The Church was in a dilemma, and she chose what appeared to be the lesser of two evils.*

Had the original purpose of the Creeds been remembered and adhered to, dogma would have had a very different history. The duty of modern thought to provide ever-fresh interpretations of the faith would have been recognized; dogma would have been restricted to the task of recalling it to the true problem by the exclusion of such theories as denied or ignored the facts from which the problem rose. Unfortunately, mediæval orthodoxy had neither the moral courage nor the intellectual discernment thus to define the province of authority in faith. The formulations of the Creeds were taken as the inerrant statement in philosophical scientific terms of Christian belief, and thereby a spurious infallibility was lent to the philosophy and science the language of which they had borrowed. From still earlier times the Bible had been regarded, not enough as the human record of a divine

* I am of course aware that the account here given of the origin of dogma would not by any means command universal assent among scholars. To go further into the arguments and evidence which support it would take us too far from our main theme. But I can at least appeal to acknowledged authorities like Bishop Gore (Bampton Lectures) and Dr. Goudge (in *The Meaning of the Creed*, ed. by G. K. A. Bell). I have myself made further remarks on the subject in *Essays in Orthodoxy*, ch. vi, and *Modern Philosophy and the Incarnation*, ch. iv

mystery gradually revealed and culminating in a life wherein the revelation was complete, but rather as a document verbally infallible in every statement with reference to every subject which it happened to touch. Thus Bible and dogma were treated together as complete statements of the truth. Accept them, and the duty of the mind was done, or at least the only duty remaining was to work out certain further deductions from the premises given, a view in part suggested by the prominence given to deduction in scholastic logic. The idea that Bible and dogma were merely indicators and protectors of a mystery continually needing fresh interpretation in thought and life, was utterly abandoned, and all attempt to return to it was treated as an act of rebellion. Thus the Middle Ages closed in the darkness of religious persecution.

The attitude of the Reformed Communions towards authority in faith has been of two types: (1) Pietistic and (2) Liberal.

(1) The Pietists, in revolting against the whole doctrinal and ecclesiastical system which the Vatican has come to represent, have nevertheless been unable to bring themselves to give up the idea of an outwardly infallible authority in religion. In appealing from the Council of Trent to the Bible, or from the modern Papacy to the Bishops of the undivided Church, they have appealed merely from one document to another, or from a living voice to a dead one. Their conception of religious authority has been essentially the same as Rome's, except in so far as the absence of a living organ has made the utterances of authority more uncertain for them and more susceptible of various interpretation. In effect, however, they have sought to confine the operation of modern thought within narrower limits than Rome herself. For since they recognize no living

voice of authority, they are in the long run forced to make their own interpretation of the Bible or of the early Fathers authoritative, and hence they tend to exclude from their communion all who differ from themselves. Protestantism of this type is essentially fissiparous.

(2) To-day Pietists of all schools are for the most part discredited, and the mantle of the Reformation has fallen on the shoulders of the Liberals. These, unfortunately, have as a rule given up altogether that appeal to the Bible and the primitive Church which, rightly understood, might have enabled them to re-establish the authority of the Church on a broader and surer foundation. They have been content to regard our Lord's life as the origin rather than as the essence of Christianity. They have allowed themselves to think of the tradition of the early Church merely as an early stage in evolution, which their more enlightened minds have outgrown. At times they have seemed far more concerned to demonstrate the fallibility than the inspiration of the Biblical records. The unity of the Christian faith they have considered to be amply safeguarded by a frequent use of the mystic word "continuity." Almost their only attempt at constructive thinking has been an appeal to the authority of a religious experience which they do not attempt to define. In effect they have misconceived the only central fact of Christianity, the exaltation of ordinary manhood into the Godhead through the life and death of Christ—that fact on the absolute reality of which the whole mystery of the Gospel depends. They have been content, if not to follow, at least to tolerate and acquiesce in the heresies which persistently whittle down or evade the mysterious fact, instead of using upon it boldly all the most lately devised implements

of modern thought in order to bring to light some new treasure of its inexhaustible meaning.

In result the Church's challenge to the intellect of the age has never been clearly heard. The new movements in science which originated in the work of Darwin, the new schools of philosophy which have sprung from Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Bergson, and William James, have either been anathematized or else allowed merely to go their own way in utter ignorance of the Christian mystery which it was their highest duty to interpret. The most characteristically modern writings on religion, in so far as they touch at all upon traditional faith, criticize the old theology of the Incarnation and the Atonement, not in order to throw new light on the evangelical facts which lie behind it, but in order to explain away the facts themselves, which they generally confuse with the least intelligent statements of the doctrines arising from them.

Thus the intellectual suspiciousness of Rome seems to receive justification from the failure of the Reformed Communions to keep whole and undefiled the Gospel mystery as a field for the intellectual research of their disciples. New forms of Gnosticism and Arianism pour from the press, new forms of orthodoxy are still to seek. Modern Arianism conceives our Lord as a kind of religious superman, and receives ready applause from the popular sentiment which finds a purely human Christ more sympathetic to its weakness, and fondly imagines that a superman is nearer to manhood than the incarnate God. Modern Gnosticism, belittling the importance of historic events, joins hands with the destructive critics of the New Testament and ministers to the subtle sense of superiority enjoyed by those who find in spiritual experience a refined substitute for the crudeness of miraculous facts. Intellectual

liberty meanwhile is vindicated on all sides as the individual's right to ignore or repudiate the Christian mystery without forfeiting his membership in the Christian Church. Thus the heirs of the Reformation have at length expelled one devil of tyranny only to leave the Church's house swept and garnished for the reception of seven devils of confusion. What wonder if the ordinary man is content simply to indulge his personal taste in belief, while those whom the anarchy appals clamour for a return to the ordered precision of Rome?

To sum up the foregoing argument, orthodox theologians, in order to safeguard the mystery entrusted to them, were driven to put forth as dogmas certain statements of the faith in a metaphysical and apparently positive form. Their aim, as the history of the Arian controversy clearly shows,* was not to present a theory of God's self-revelation, but to assert the problem of the mystery which the heretics were abolishing by the false completeness of their explanations. But in the long run this distinction proved too fine for a Church which had lost its first wonder in the Gospel to maintain. The successors of the authors of the Catholic Creeds themselves mistook the statements of the Creeds for an inerrant metaphysical exposition of the Gospel. The Creeds, especially the Athanasian, had expressed themselves in terms of the Aristotelian doctrines of metaphysics and natural science which then dominated the world.† Thus the upholding of the Creeds seemed to lend an absolute authority to Aristotelian and scholastic theories. In the result new and different

* Cf., e.g., Ottley, *The Doctrine of the Incarnation*, pp. 311–320.

† By this assertion I do not mean to beg any question as to how far the authors of the creeds themselves used these terms in their strictly metaphysical or Aristotelian sense. To the word *ὑπόστασις* they evidently gave a new meaning.

theories, instead of being welcomed by the Church as throwing fresh light on the Gospel mystery, came under the official ban, and a legacy of misunderstanding between orthodoxy and modern thought was bequeathed, which the Reformation has still done little to remove.

The appeal to the Bible and the primitive Church, which should have saved the Reformers from going after the errors of Rome, too often only led them further astray. For it was to the formula rather than to the purpose of the old theologians, to the letter rather than to the spirit of the Bible, that the appeal was made ; and its effect was merely to substitute one formal infallibility for another. Thus it came about that the cruel sentence passed on Galileo was echoed in the shouts of blasphemy raised against Darwin and Huxley.

Meanwhile the apostles of secular learning, hypnotized by the fascination of the liberty so hardly won in the teeth of the Church's opposition, have failed to realize that, apart from an authoritative faith, their greatest discoveries and achievements cannot win their fullest reward in illuminating the deepest and most vital problem of all—the working of the eternal goodness in the world of time. Without religious authority the efforts of secular knowledge dissipate themselves along the divergent lines of special studies, and their bearing on the whole meaning and purpose of life is ignored and lost. The central mystery of God's nature forgotten, explained away, or hopelessly misconceived, never receives the fresh and fuller interpretation which it is the business of modern thought to supply.

The history of dogma is in part a study in the failure of the Church to use her authority in faith as the necessary help and guide of those ceaseless human efforts whereby alone truth can be won.

§ 2. The Opportunity and Failure of the Church of England

We have now to show in greater detail how the following of the principle we have sketched would lead us to a different mode of conceiving authority in faith from that of the Roman Catholic Church and also from that of the religious bodies properly called Protestant.

The Roman Church has always acknowledged a living authority as a final court of appeal in deciding what is the authoritative faith committed to the Church's care. According to the modern Roman theory this court of appeal is the Pope speaking ex cathedra, i.e. in his capacity as Vicar of Christ and representative of the Church which is Christ's Body. Speaking thus, the Pope is credited with an absolute infallibility; his authority does not belong to him as an individual, but as a specially inspired representative declaring what has been believed in the Church *semper ubique et ab omnibus*. The Roman Church thus safeguards herself in theory from imposing upon her members new beliefs which were not contained in the original revelation of God through Jesus Christ. That revelation is final and complete; nothing can be added thereto. Yet much of the truth revealed in Christ was at first only implicit in Christian belief. It takes time and progressive intellectual effort to draw out the implications. This drawing out and unfolding of the truth latent in the original revelation is the work of the Church's mind acting under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Who guides it into all truth. It is the task of Papal authority merely to register and define each step in the advance, when once it has been made and secured in the experience of Christian thought. The Creeds

represent the first stage in this process of deductive definition. They are therefore infallible statements of the truth. But they have only begun the process of explication ; it is the duty of Papal authority to carry it further by adding from time to time newly formulated dogmas, as the Church comes ever more fully into possession of her heritage of truth. Thus the more recently promulgated dogmas concerning Transubstantiation, the Immaculate Conception, and Papal Infallibility are simply fresh deductions made from the truth of the original revelation which the Creeds began to formulate. The process comes to its ideal end only when all the implications of the Christian revelation have been fully drawn out, and the faith dogmatically stated by the Church becomes identical with the whole of religious truth which the mind can conceive. In the meantime the faith dogmatically stated can and must anticipate reason ; yet it is essentially reasonable, and reason, as it develops, will constantly corroborate old dogma and ally itself to new.

The whole theory, however, symmetrically perfect as it is, contains one fatal flaw. It assumes that spatial metaphor holds good of the process whereby truth is attained—or, in other words, that part of truth can be perfectly formulated before the whole truth can be formulated at all. The whole truth is conceived as an area over which progressive advance is made. As the advance goes on, the tracts already won can be exactly defined and secured before the next step is taken.* This whole spatial conception of truth belongs characteristically to the deductive logic of Aristotle and the Schoolmen, with whose doctrines Rome has been driven to identify herself in order to maintain her

* This seems to be the fallacy underlying Dom John Chapman's argument in *Bishop Gore and the Catholic Claims*, ch. i, p. 14.

theory. Radically different is the modern view, which sees in truth a coherent system of interdependent parts. If truth be such a system, the parts can only be adequately viewed and articulated in relation to an already viewed and articulated whole. One cannot see or state the meaning of any part of a drama until one has seen the whole of it. It is only in the last act that the real bearing of the first becomes plain, and the knowledge of the last act may cause a radical revision of the estimate of the first. So in the system of truth, all appreciation of its parts must be open to revision until the whole is perfectly apprehended. As each fresh part or member of the truth-system becomes clear, a certain revaluation and restatement of the parts previously seen is required in order to relate them to the new truth which has now become apparent.*

It is thus that the authority exercised by the Pope in matters of faith becomes hostile to true freedom, because it invades what ought to be the sphere of independent speculation. Many of the past formulations of the Church have been couched in Aristotelian language. To endow them with absolute infallibility as positive statements of what the Church believes, is to postulate finality for the philosophic terms of Aristotle. If the Aristotelian philosophy is superseded by another, it must be possible to give a better statement in other terms to what was formerly stated in Aristotelian terms; and consequently, in so far as its terms are Aristotelian, the infallibility of the old

* Thus St. Vincent of Lerin's simile from organic growth (Comm. XXIII, 55, cf. Bishop Gore, *Roman Catholic Claims*, p. 56, and Dom John Chapman, *Bishop Gore and the Catholic Claims*, p. 26, *seq.*) really destroys the whole argument for verbally infallible formulations. Every part of an organism is modified in the process of assimilation by which it grows. There is no definable substratum which is unaltered.

statement is destroyed. The most conspicuous instances to which this criticism has been applied are the clauses of the Nicene and Athanasian Creeds which deal with "substance" and "person," and the doctrine of transubstantiation. Undoubtedly a distinction may be drawn between the two cases. In using the terms *ousia* and *hypostasis* the authors of the Creeds were excluding heresy by the best means they could find; they were not taking over a ready-made philosophic theory and making it authoritative for the interpretation of the faith. Clearly they gave to the word *hypostasis*, at least, a new meaning which Aristotelianism could neither recognize nor justify. On the other hand, the authors of the dogma of transubstantiation did borrow a current philosophic theory as the authoritative interpretation of a mystery. But this difference does not affect our present contention that developments in human thought must provide the successive guardians of the faith with a better equipment in means of verbal expression, and therefore no means of verbal expression can be in principle infallible, or incapable for all time of improvement.

Reformed Christianity meanwhile, while very often maintaining in effect the necessity of an infallible outward authority, has in doing so found that authority in the past, either in the Bible or in the general Councils of the united Church, or even, less formally, in the writings of some great reformer. Protestantism *

* Here and elsewhere difficulty may very reasonably be felt as to the use of the convenient, but otherwise unsatisfactory, term Protestantism. In general I mean by it that type of Christianity which, reacting strongly against ecclesiastical formalism, has relied on the spiritual experience of the individual in such a manner as to discredit the authority of ecclesiastical forms and institutions. In this sense all Christian denominations and parties usually characterized as "Protestant" or "Evangelical" partake of Pro-

has thus escaped the dominion of any living court of appeal. But the freedom has been purchased at a price which makes it at best a very doubtful advantage.

Experience shows ever more clearly that the authority of a mere document is without practical value unless its meaning can be authoritatively determined by a living voice. It is, of course, notorious that a coach and four can usually be driven through an Act of Parliament, and lawyers have exercised their ingenuity in vain to devise forms of words which cannot be forced into a meaning quite different from that which they were intended to convey. The verbal infallibility of a document is therefore never a safeguard against ingenious perversions of its sense. But apart from all question of intentional perversion, the authority of mere forms of words is largely an illusion, because they always require a present authority to determine their present application. Forms of words, however universal their reference is meant to be, are nevertheless framed by individual people to meet particular situations. When different situations arise, the actual meaning and application of the words cannot be self-evident or entirely closed to doubt and questioning. Even our Lord's own words were determined in form by the particular circumstances of His life, and He showed His divine wisdom not least in His emphatic promise of the Spirit to be His witness and interpreter. It is only in the power of His Spirit that His sayings can be rightly interpreted and applied. And what is true of the recorded sayings of the Perfect Man Himself is at least equally true in the case of the imperfect men who were the authors of Holy Writ and the framers

testantism, though some to a much greater degree than others. Throughout I have used the word to denote a type of Christianity rather than any particular section of Christians.

of conciliar decrees. Viewed in the light of the one Spirit who inspired them and us, their record is indeed the most inexhaustible of literary treasures. But, apart from inspired interpretation, the doctrine of an inspired Bible becomes a superstition which has in the past degraded religious argument into a futile and unedifying exercise in the slinging of texts. The objections to the Bible as a series of formally infallible statements apply also to the Creeds. One cannot even consider their meaning apart from the purpose for which they were framed; for apart from that purpose they can have no meaning at all. But the moment the consideration of their purpose is admitted, the question must be raised whether in different circumstances another formula would not fulfil that purpose better, and if so, whether a true conservatism should not fulfil the original purpose at the expense of amending or amplifying the original formula. A right decision can only be reached by those who share the selfsame Spirit Who inspired the authors of the Creeds. Protestantism in clinging fanatically to the written letter either makes all authority an empty form and surrenders in practice entirely to individual judgment, or else one party in the body prevails, and, since no living authority is recognized by all, those who differ from the prevailing opinion are bound in conscience to secede.

It was thus that original Protestantism appealed to the authority of the past against the contemporary authority which it found itself unable to recognize. This appeal has failed, as it must always fail, to provide an effective decision for the present. The Liberal Protestantism of to-day is therefore more and more inclined to join hands with the so-called Modernism which will recognize in matters of faith no court of appeal whatsoever by which the Church is to be bound.

The disastrous consequences of this general invalidation of authority in faith have been already indicated.

But surely the conception of authority as safeguarding a revealed mystery does suggest a way in which ecclesiastical authority might operate effectively on behalf of Christian truth without trespassing on the province of independent speculation. We shall follow Rome in giving authority a living voice. The revelation of Christ has been entrusted to human stewardship with the promise of His Spirit for the guidance of His stewards. Those stewards are the official representatives of the Church, and no appeal either to the formulations of the past or to the confusions of the present can relieve them of their responsibility for the truth entrusted to their charge. But the nature of the charge must be clearly apprehended, and our conception of it, following, as we believe, primitive models, differs in important respects from the Roman. In so far as authoritative definition is concerned, it is a charge, not directly to explicate or to expound the truth of revelation, but to protect it. The duty of the stewards is to preserve whole and undefiled the evangelical facts which constitute that which has to be explicated and expounded. In principle, therefore, no human officials and no dogmatic statements can be infallible. The facts of the Incarnation and the Atonement are verities unchangeable and absolute, but only partially expressible in human language. The official guardians, to whom the mysterious verities have been committed, possess authority to preserve them by dogma from interpretations which would in effect destroy them. The official guardians may err—the holding of an office is no absolute specific against mistakes—but within the limits of their commission their authority is binding upon the body wherein it is

exercised, and the promise of the Spirit to be the Church's guide is a warrant that she will not be wholly delivered over to deceivers. At the very worst, even the Scribes and Pharisees sat in Moses' seat, and our Lord enjoined respect for their authority. If, therefore, in the last resort a particular teacher finds himself in conscience bound to advance theories which the accredited guardians of the Church condemn, it is not an unreasonable demand that he should cease to claim the Church's sanction for his teaching, until the guardians have been persuaded that it is legitimate.

According to this view dogma is not identical with doctrine. Dogma is intended to exclude error, not to inform ignorance; to warn the heretic or unbeliever, not to instruct the faithful. The distinction between dogma and doctrine is thus a distinction of purpose. The same proposition may do double duty both as dogma and doctrine, and may be treated from either point of view. Thus the statement that our Lord rose from the dead, both excludes a denial or perversion of the fact, and informs ignorance on the subject. Metaphysical propositions may also be viewed either as dogma or as doctrine, but they have not quite the same authority in both cases.* The proposition that our Lord is of one substance with the Father has full and permanent authority as protecting the evangelical fact of the Incarnation from heretical perversion. As a positive teaching of what the Incarnation signifies in intellectual terms, its authority is relative to the esteem in which the world of thought holds Aristotelian philosophy. If that philosophy is discarded in favour

* The distinction here suggested between dogma and doctrine roughly corresponds to that drawn by the Roman Church between a definition under anathema and an authoritative encyclical (*Bishop Gore and the Catholic Claims*, p. 116).

of a better, the better philosophy will suggest a better doctrine of the Incarnation. It will be seen, therefore, that, at least as far as philosophic statements are concerned, dogma does not constitute doctrine, but is rather its necessary basis or guide.

Doctrine must be adaptable in its form and method. Different levels of comprehension in the people to be instructed, different situations in the world of secular thought, will impose different forms of expression upon those who teach the faith. The permanent element in doctrine is the one Gospel mystery of the facts of the Incarnation and Atonement safeguarded by the dogma which protects them. The officials of the Church may from time to time, if it be judged expedient, give their imprimatur to particular formulations of doctrine, but it should be recognized that such authorization is provisional, and assent to it could not be required as *de fide*. Thus we come in sight of a system of doctrine definite within limits without being simply cut and dried or endowed with a spurious finality. It would be truly educative, i.e. recognized, not as a substitute for independent mental effort, but as a help and encouragement thereto.

The permanence of a *dogma* is found in the permanent value of the purpose for which it was framed, rather than in any slavish adhesion to its letter. The main historic facts of Christ's Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension constitute as facts the Gospel mystery, and the assertion of them is therefore permanently binding as a safeguard of the Christian faith. But there are heresies which do not deny the physical facts of the Gospel and yet put on them an interpretation so false as to destroy their meaning. Thus neither Arianism nor Gnosticism in every form was concerned to deny the main facts of the Gospel narrative. Arianism

welcomed miracles, which readily appealed to the thaumaturgical tastes of popular heathenism, while to the Gnostic, who thought matter itself unreal, what might be said to have happened in the material sphere was in any case a matter of indifference. It was against such heretics that philosophic dogma was directed. As fulfilling its function this dogma will retain a permanent authority, yet subsequent philosophic progress may make it possible to improve its form, or a disappearance of old heresies might make it practically irrelevant. It is the duty of the stewards of the faith in every age to make such intellectual formulations as are necessary to preserve the eternal mystery, and thus to follow the authors of the first Creeds in their essential purpose. This is the enlightened conservatism of the spirit, not the blind fanaticism which clings jealously to the letter, while it surrenders that for which the letter stood. Thus we arrive in sight of a system of dogma which makes reconciliation between traditional faith and modern thought in principle a possibility, for dogma will simply direct the efforts of thought on to the real problem, without dictating to the mind any outward system of intellectual expression.

What, then, has been the failure of our own Church of England? Surely it has been a failure to follow in the spirit both the oldest dogmatists of the Catholic Church and those who inspired the original English Reformation. Our conservatism has been too much the blind clinging to a formula, our liberalism too much an opposition to external authority as such.

The English Reformation was not an ideal reform either in motive or in result. Yet in the counsels of the saner minds by which the Elizabethan Settlement was reached, we can trace principles of reason which

condemn much of the subsequent history of our Church. It is specially important to observe how the Reformers conceived their stewardship of the Christian faith. Against the errors of Rome their appeal lay to the Bible and the primitive Church. In other words, their essential charge against Rome was that she had encumbered the original Gospel mystery with various glosses and deductions, both in faith and practice, which she sought to impose upon the faithful as being of equal authority with the Gospel itself. This abuse of authority was in the way to destroy utterly the spiritual freedom of Christian thought and life, and a breach with those who were responsible for it was no longer to be avoided. But the reformers knew that a mere reaffirmation of old documents as containing all things necessary to salvation, would not by itself safeguard the Gospel mystery in the present. There were modern heresies which must be excluded no less than ancient, and dogmatic terms, which had served their purpose in one age, would not necessarily suffice in another. On the other hand, to write new Creeds was an impossibility. The Creeds were the property of the Catholic Church, not of any particular section of it. If they were ever to be altered or enlarged, that must be the task of the Church as a whole. Meanwhile in an age of religious disunion it was more than ever important not to sever those outward links which remained.

Accordingly the Reformed Church of England adopted the expedient of putting forth a dogmatic statement embodied in thirty-nine Articles of Religion. These Articles were intended to preserve the faith implicit in the Bible and partly defined in the Creeds, and in so doing to admit as wide a variety of opinion as was compatible with the exclusion of heretical views

definitely repugnant to the Gospel. The main conception was eminently Catholic and reasonable. The terms of the actual document may have been too vague and too inclusive of doctrines really inconsistent with the Church of England's ideal. Certainly the framers of the Articles desired to admit all those whose opinions could at all permit them to be loyal members of an anti-Papal Catholic Church. But to criticize the Articles on the ground that they are not a complete or wholly clear statement of Anglican doctrine, is to ignore their essentially *dogmatic* purpose. Their authors frankly meant to allow as great a variety as possible within the limits which the Articles dogmatically define.*

Unfortunately, from the very beginning Protestant elements in the English Church exercised a preponderant influence. An essentially Protestant conception of authority was manifested in the attempt to settle disputes by requiring that the Articles should be interpreted in their plain grammatical sense.† No document as a merely grammatical combination of words has any sense at all. In practice all vitally important documents require a living voice to determine their application; otherwise their authority will die a lingering death under the pressure of interminable disputes. Documents are a guide and a check to living authorities, and a means of making public the principles on which they act, but the document cannot act on behalf of the living organ or take over its responsibility for decision.

The refusal to face this fact squarely has been the prime cause of the doctrinal confusion into which the

* Cf. Bishop Gibson, *The Declaration of Assent*, pp. 28–33.

† See King James I's Declaration printed before the Articles of Religion in the Prayer Book.

Church of England has been plunged. The Thirty-Nine Articles referred to certain sixteenth-century heresies and framed their reply in sixteenth-century language. While they suggested permanent principles of dogma and doctrine, their actual form was essentially occasional—adapted, that is, to the peculiar circumstances of the time. But with the shifting movements of thought their irrelevance to new issues has become increasingly apparent. In certain cases even the actual intention of their authors has become obscure, and the dialectical experts of the Oxford Movement had no difficulty in showing that, as far as the letter went, the assent demanded need have no terrors for the most scrupulous conscience. In the meantime Parliamentary control had rendered the conciliar action of the Church quite nugatory in regard to the larger issues of Church government.

In practice, therefore, the guardianship of the faith has come to rest in the individual Bishop's power of rejecting those who seek ordination as accredited teachers in the Church ; and it is generally understood that those who accept the Articles in a sense which the ordaining Bishop considers legitimate are perfectly justified in making the declaration required.* Additional relief has been given by some weakening of the terms of the formula in which the assent is given. In result the actual decision as to what is, and what is not, consonant with the Christian faith, rests entirely with a living authority—viz. the Bishop. In theory this might seem to offer a wider scope for tyranny than is open even to the Pope. In practice, however, the Bishop's authority is so restricted that it is largely ineffective. It does not affect the laity, from whom

* The ordaining Bishop represents the *animum imponentis*, cf. Bishop Gibson, *The Declaration of Assent*, pp. 38–41.

no subscription to the Articles is required. Moreover, if the Church is to hold together at all, the Bishops are obviously bound to act on some form of at least tacit agreement. But the Bishops are appointed by the Prime Minister on behalf of the Crown, with the result that no type of opinion except one which is essentially moderate can ever preponderate on the Episcopal bench. Thus a working arrangement has been reached, under which the Church of England seems able to drift on indefinitely without requiring any further formulations of dogma.

Undoubtedly the system works, but it is working at a terrible and ever-increasing cost. Dogmatic authority, where it is exercised at all, is exercised privately by individual Bishops. Occasionally statements of general opinion are put forth by the Bishops in common, but there is really no public statement of the principles on which actual decisions are based. A few years ago the Bishops made a pronouncement upon the historical clauses of the Creed, but no one could have foretold from it what their decision would in fact be in any actual case, as, for example, the question lately raised about the new Bishop of Hereford. The Church of England really bears no sufficient public witness to the principles on which she exercises her stewardship of the Christian faith.

Among other disastrous consequences of this omission is the fact that there is no modern dogmatic basis for the instruction of Ordinands. The text for that instruction is still the primitive Creeds and the Elizabethan Articles, the form of which has no reference and no immediate relevance to the problems and heresies which perplex the modern mind. Can we wonder if clergy so trained betray very little consciousness of modern issues, and seem to speak to the people either

in an alien tongue of mediæval piety or with the stammering lips of doubt? Meanwhile in the world at large, in so far as it comes under the influence of Anglicanism at all, private judgment is allowed to run riot, and no official challenge is offered to its wildest absurdities. Modern intellectuals with a religious bent follow the old paths of the Arian and the Gnostic without hearing even the echo of an authoritative voice to tell them whither they are going, and to recall them from their wanderings to the real problem which demands the best of their intellectual efforts.

Rome has taken mediæval systems of thought under the ægis of her infallibility, and views with suspicion all attempts to give to the Gospel mystery a modern expression which cannot be forced into the categories of scholasticism. Anglicanism formulates no dogma at all, and presents the modern mind with no definite problem of revealed truth. In result the best of modern thought has lost touch altogether with the ancient mystery. Modern thinkers either ignore it, on the assumption that it is all as out of date as the Aristotelianism which once was its guardian, or else they offer easy explanations of it, in bland unconsciousness that they have no idea what it means or what it is for. Meanwhile faint-hearted believers, alarmed by the tempestuous confusion which many call freedom of thought, cry out to the Church to jettison wholesale her cargo of revelation, in the hope that she may weather the storm when the purpose of her voyage has been lost. Yet the tempest might have been turned into a prospering gale, if the navigators of the vessel had known how to trim the sails. Pragmatism might have thrown much new light on the verification of dogma in experience. It might have taught us how far an orthodox theology of substance can be

replaced by an orthodox theology of will. Hegelianism, with its insistence on the self-transcendence of the finite and on the concrete universal, might have interpreted to us afresh the union of two natures in Christ and His representative Manhood. Bergson's *élan vital* might have inspired us to see anew the work of the Spirit in the gradual evolving of the world. Theories of the subliminal self might have helped us to enter further into the depths of our personal relationship to God. We have lost the rarest and richest treasures which modern thought might have displayed to our view, because that thought has never been brought to bear upon traditional faith. The primary cause lies in a false conception of dogmatic authority.

An instructive, though of course incomplete, analogy to the part played by dogma in the religious society is to be found in the part played by the House of Lords in the body politic. Like dogma, the Upper House is needed for the performance of a stewardship, to prevent what is traditional from being too hastily swept away, before the real merits of the so-called reforms have had considered judgment passed upon them. Some years ago the constitution of the House of Lords seemed to be an anachronism which hampered the proper fulfilment of this task. The critics of the peers formed themselves into two groups—those who wished merely to limit or to remove their right of veto, and those who wished to reform the constitution of the House while leaving the veto intact. Meanwhile a small but determined body of Tories were convinced that no drastic change in either direction was required. The attitude of the religious world towards the problem of dogma shows one striking and instructive difference. The religious Conservatives have simply opposed themselves to change. The

Liberals have been entirely concentrated on the endeavour to weaken or abolish the dogmatic veto. A party zealous to reform dogma, so that it may do its work effectively in modern conditions, has hardly yet arisen. Yet surely it must arise, and in its hands lies the future of the faith.

CHAPTER II

AUTHORITY IN CHRISTIAN LIFE

§ 1. Sacraments and the Mystery of Holiness

We now turn from faith to practice, from belief to conduct. We shall find a similar problem and a similar failure on the Church's part to use authority aright.

Nothing is more conspicuous in our Lord's moral teaching than His refusal to give explicit rules or decisions on matters of conduct. Christians have been obstinately slow to understand that the Sermon on the Mount means the substitution, not of one code of rules for another, but of principles, which require thought to apply them, for rules, which appear to carry a self-evident application with them. The command to give alms seems to settle the question whether a particular beggar shall receive a shilling or not. The command "Thou shalt not kill" seems to settle at once the legitimacy of war, though few have been found to interpret it in its obvious sense. But the commands "Thou shalt love God with all thy heart and thy neighbour as thyself" in themselves settle no such questions; there is no one kind of action which they enjoin in all circumstances. They are principles which must issue in everything we do, but their appropriate expression in act requires thinking and planning in addition to mere goodwill. Hence Christian freedom

from bondage to outward commandments really makes a more exacting demand upon effort; for it incorporates into the task of good living, not merely the obedience of the will, but the reasoning powers of the mind.

Thus the ethics of the Gospel are in the highest sense of the word utilitarian.* The purpose of all life is the loving service of God and man, and the function of morality is to devise and carry out the best means of achieving it in action. Thus the authority of the Christian religion in regard to life does not save the mind trouble by prescribing the right action in all conceivable circumstances; its aim is rather to direct the effort of mankind towards a practical solution of the true problem of conduct—viz. the consecration of all human activity.

This interpretation of our Lord's attitude towards morals is naturally based, not so much on individual sayings, as on the whole tone and tenor of His teaching. It is true that in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere He does lay down what are in verbal form outward rules of conduct. But surely, in view of our Lord's teaching on the sixth and seventh Commandments and His statement of the Golden Rule (to say nothing of His habit of teaching in proverbs and parables), we are abundantly justified in maintaining that such apparently outward rules are rather pictorially stated principles; and in fact it is not unreasonable to suppose our Lord often purposely gave illustrations which it would be impossible to use as formulas to be copied. The more we study the ethical teaching of the Gospels the more clearly does it appear that action is to be judged by utilitarian standards, i.e. by

* I have dealt with this subject at greater length in *Essays in Orthodoxy*, ch. viii.

its suitability for achieving an end. This is the lesson which the parable of the Unjust Steward drives home with such uncompromising vigour. It is in the conception of the end that the teaching of Christ, by placing holiness for happiness, so far surpasses in moral height anything that modern utilitarians have offered us. Christ's teaching places the highest end of all life before the moral faculties of man, but it warns him in no uncertain terms that the means to achieve the end will require all his powers of wit as well as of will. The love which irradiates the Gospel ethic has no tinge of the sentimentality which excuses by a plea of good intentions the failure to think out the consequences of its action.

But when all is said, is the loving service of God and man a definite ideal to be striven after?—is it anything more than the dream of a visionary, which will not bear contact with the hard world of realities? The answer is in the life of Jesus Christ Himself. There is the realization in plain fact of the perfect consecration of manhood. There is the concrete ideal of perfect communion between man and God, not so much to be striven after as to be striven into by the united efforts of the humanity which Christ has exalted. In this sense, then, is Christ an ensample of godly life. The following of the example does not consist in an external reproduction of Christ's actions, in so far as such reproduction is possible at all. Imitation of that kind could only cover a small field of human endeavour, and would not in that field demand the effort of thought which asks how Christ's Spirit should be expressed in circumstances externally different from those of His earthly life. The true imitation of Christ is the entering into His life, the treading of that path into fellowship with God, which Christ's own footsteps

have marked out, not in act only, but also in thought, in feeling, and in will.

As Christ is Himself the Truth for Christian faith, to be interpreted by the progressive speculations of the intellect, so Christ is Himself the Way for Christian life to be entered into by the progressive endeavour of human conduct. And as in the sphere of faith the reconciliation of authority with freedom is found in safeguarding the mystery of Christ's life in relation to truth, so in the sphere of conduct the reconciliation of authority to freedom is found in safeguarding the mystery of Christ's life in relation to holiness. Christ's person is at once the mystery of truth for human thought, and the mystery of holiness for human life. Action is to the mystery of holiness very much what language is to the mystery of truth—a partial expression capable of progressive improvement. The holiness of Christ is as inexpressible by action as the truth which is in Christ is inexpressible in speech. Yet the mystery of holiness finds partial expression in every good act of men, indeed in all good human life conceived as activity ; and the very incompleteness of the expression is a challenge and a stimulus to further effort. Man must find and struggle along the way of holiness himself with the Spirit's help ; there is no authority which can make the task easier or take from his shoulders the responsibility for failure to fulfil it. Yet apart from the fact that Christ has raised ordinary manhood to perfect holiness, there is nothing to rouse or stimulate his endeavour ; the very possibility of perfect holiness is in doubt, the very direction in which it must be sought is uncertain, and man left to wander without a way may very reasonably be content to remain where he is. The authority of the Church in regard to Christian life rests in her duty to keep the

mystery of Christ's holiness whole and undefiled as the end to be striven after by her members.

How shall this duty be fulfilled? It is part of the Christian conception of goodness as a consecration, and of action as a means thereto, that we hold goodness to work from within outwards through the operation of the Spirit in man's own heart and head, rather than from without inwards through obedience to external rules. The Church exercises her authority aright, in so far as by its means she puts her members into communion with that life of Christ which is the end and inspiration of their efforts. But this communion of holiness, like that of truth, requires an external stewardship. Man is always failing to appreciate and to be loyal to the mystery of his high calling. He is prone to remain content with low standards of conventional morality, simply because he has no idea what heights of holiness soar above his present standing ground and are yet within reach of the Christian's power to attain; or else he wanders off after eccentricities of practice which aim at something less than the presentation of the whole man—soul and body—perfect before God. The extreme form of ascetic mysticism, reckless of the body in its concentration on the soul, and Christian Science, tempting us to look on spiritual faith primarily as a means to physical health, both impair the perfection of Christian holiness in body and soul together. The duty of Church authority is to challenge such sloth and such errors by keeping marked out the true path for those who receive grace to set foot upon it.

Unfortunately this is not the manner in which the Church's authority has usually operated in the past. The mischievous tendency of authority has always been to substitute itself for or to make unnecessary the

full effort of those over whom it is exercised. The wrong use of authority has usually taken one of two forms: (1) a return to the Mosaic conception of morality as consisting in obedience to outward rules; or (2) the encouragement of superstitious belief about the Sacraments.

(1) The most conspicuous instance of a return to Mosaic rules on the part of the Christian Church is to be found in the direction of souls, as it has been commonly practised by the Roman Catholic priesthood towards the ordinary laity. Whatever be the modern theory, and even in many cases the practice, of direction in the Roman Church, it is undeniable that the general effect of the system is to make the layman think that, when he has exactly performed the actions which the Church, through the priest, enjoins upon him, he has performed his whole Christian duty, and is entitled to regard his achievement with a reasonable self-satisfaction. The layman, by a surrender of moral independence, is thus enabled to thrust off on to other shoulders responsibility for the Christian conduct of his life. The attractiveness and the practical advantages of this arrangement are indisputable. They are responsible for many secessions to Rome on the part of those who cannot or will not undertake the burden of working out their own rules of life, or who can see no intermediate course between having their actions prescribed for them and being left to drift entirely without authoritative guidance. But according to our view the whole practice of transferring individual responsibility for action involves a fundamental disloyalty to the true principles of Christian authority.

Romanizers are, however, by no means the only persons open to this charge. Many of the most anti-Roman English Christians regard the conscience as an

external and formally infallible director, in exactly the same way as the less educated Roman regards his priest. Truly defined, conscience is nothing other than the moral judgment of the individual, as susceptible to error, as much in need of thoughtful training, as his judgment in art or science. The only difference lies in the fact that moral problems are more immediately and universally pressing than others, and consequently require a more universal effort and training for their solution. Many persons, however, mean by conscience simply moral intuitions, largely in fact the result of their heredity and circumstances, but exalted by themselves into a voice of quite independent authority, which informs them without further ado what is the right action in any given case. Even such a profound philosopher as Bishop Butler did not wholly escape this manifest absurdity, which seems to have a peculiar attraction for the British temperament. We have, of course, every reason to know that the Holy Spirit guides the action of those who try to follow His lead, and that without Him we cannot think or do anything that is rightful. We have no reason to suppose that this guidance is given through an infallible oracle, resident in every human being, which will settle off-hand any question propounded to it. This view of conscience springs from the innate reluctance of the mind to undertake the effort which the proper adaptation of action to the fulfilment of Christian purposes really requires. The Englishman will not consent to surrender his moral independence to a priest, nor will he face the full responsibility which its retention involves ; he therefore sets up an unseen and wholly irresponsible priest called conscience, to which he will surrender as much of his responsibility as he finds inconvenient to own.

(2) Still more disastrous to Christian morality than a return to a Mosaic following of outward ordinances is the superstitious treatment of the Sacraments which the Christian Church has at times undoubtedly encouraged. The essence of superstition lies in the attempt to find a less arduous way of salvation than the consecration of the whole man in the service of God. Superstitious practices are all directed towards conciliating the divine favour, or averting the divine wrath, by some form of outward act which will obviate the necessity for obedience to God's will in heart and mind. St. Paul in 1 Corinthians x * expressly cautions his converts against such a use of the Christian Sacraments, and the history of the Church has demonstrated over and over again the need for his warning. In all forms of organized Christianity there has been present a tendency to suggest that participation in the Sacraments, whether by Baptism, attendance at Mass, reception of Absolution, or even by the act of Communion itself, somehow releases the soul from the penalty of sin without exacting the highest standard of righteousness, somehow obviates the necessity for the individual to struggle after holiness instead of enduing him with new strength for the conflict, somehow removes difficulties from his path rather than gives him power to overcome them. It was the belief that the sacramental system of the Church supplied essentially a substitute for Christian living, which alienated Tolstoy from orthodoxy after his conversion had brought him back to Christian faith. Mosaic ordinances at least inculcate a clear, if limited, morality. A superstitious doctrine of Sacraments cuts at the very root of morality itself

* In the passage in which he points out that God was not well pleased with all the Israelites, though they all ate the same spiritual meat and all drank the same spiritual drink.

by its suggestion that it is enough to keep a rule of observance less exacting even than a moral rule. It is a product of the spirit which circumvents with an easy *corban* even the plainest rules of human duty.

But the fact that such a teaching of the Sacraments is the worst deviation from the true stewardship of Christian holiness is exactly a case of the old law, *Corruptio optimi pessima.* For, rightly taught and administered, the Sacraments are exactly the means whereby the true mystery of holiness may be preserved and made operative. The essence of a Sacrament is the communication through an outward sign of a living spiritual power. Baptism gives the power to start life as a redeemed child of God ; Holy Communion is the nourishment which sustains the power to live the Christian life through actual contact with Him Who is its source. These are commonplaces, but their connexion with the authority of the Church in Christian life may easily be overlooked. Truly understood, the performance of the sacramental acts in itself solves no problem and removes no difficulties. Through faith those acts are the means whereby an infinitely better gift is bestowed—viz. the entry into the life of Christ, the enduing of the power in which a man can solve all problems and remove all difficulties by his own effort, which is yet not his own, but the operation of God's Spirit within him. The Sacraments put a man in living touch with the one holy life wherein his own holiness is to be wrought ; they keep ever before him its mystery and inspire him with its spirit, so that he may achieve in all his living an ever more perfect consecration in its service. Thus it comes about that the function of Church authority in practice is to act as the steward of the sacramental means of grace, not to tell man precisely what his duty is, or with

what outward accomplishment he may rest satisfied, but to teach man the purpose of the Sacraments and to keep him in communion with the mysterious power whereof they are the vehicle. "This is My Body; do this in remembrance of Me." It is an outward rule, and yet it is also that which supersedes all outward rules with the gift of a diviner grace, the sharing of the very life of Him by Whom the rule was made.

Thus the Sacraments follow as a corollary from the whole ethic of consecration which the new Testament teaches. Apart from the outward authoritative means of power, the ideal Christian life is too high and heavenly really to concentrate and focus upon itself the endeavour of ordinary mankind. Again, any other method of authority than that involved by the stewardship of the Sacraments impairs the free independence of moral effort whereby alone real consecration can be reached. Only, in order that the Sacraments may do their work, ecclesiastical authority is bound to condemn any teaching which would deny their truth and any practice which would profane their sanctity. Thus, again, the outward signs of the Sacrament occupy in regard to Christian life much the same place which dogma occupies in regard to Christian revelation. The Sacraments do not by themselves or mechanically impart Christian holiness, any more than Creeds by themselves or mechanically impart Christian truth. Creeds and Sacraments show how and where the twin mysteries of truth and holiness may be entered into by those who hunger and thirst after their attainment.

There is no more disquieting sign in English religion to-day than the complacency with which thousands of those, who in a vague sense profess themselves Christians, remain content with a wretchedly low standard of achievement in the Christian life. There is a fatal

tendency on the part of those who have never fulfilled any more than conventional codes of morality, to declare that they have never done any harm, and to suppose that nothing further can be required of them even by the Eternal Judge. It is a commonplace now to remark, either in commendation or disapproval, upon the absence of the sense of sin—which, after all, is only another name for this disastrous self-satisfaction. How far is the failure to apprehend the mystery of Christian holiness due to the undoubted fact that the vast majority even of baptized English people live utterly out of touch with sacramental means of grace? Zealous prophets in the past have tried to quicken a sense of sin by a lively picturing of the terrors of hell; but this method has deservedly gone out of fashion. Is it not the true remedy that the Church should return to the duty she has in the past forsaken of plainly insisting on the Sacraments as the appointed means whereby communion with Christ is to be found? As long as the Sacraments are left in the background of Christian duty, as privileges reserved for the especially pious, or experiences only appreciated by the cultured few, so long will the ideal of Christian holiness remain without meaning or without appeal for the vast mass to whom the Church is trying to bring her gospel of life.

§ 2. The Opportunity and Failure of the Church of England

Let us again, in the sphere of Christian practice, endeavour out of a more detailed criticism of the past to lay a sounder foundation for authority in the future.

We have already noticed the Roman system of direction as in practice the return towards a Mosaic

conception of righteousness. Yet this system is itself part of a wider conception of Church organization, and the part can only be fairly criticized in relation to the whole. The placing of the laity under the rule of the clergy, which is the characteristic feature of Romanism in practice, really belongs to a far-reaching attempt to organize the whole Christian society on a principle of recognizing two distinct standards, degrees, or classes of membership.

In its origin the attempt was designed to solve an urgent problem which must in some form confront every religious society as soon as it has passed its missionary youth and entered upon its institutional or "established" maturity. During its missionary stage the bulk of a Church's members are in the full sense converts, i.e. people who have entered it at an adult age from personal conviction, and belonging for the most part to that psychological type which has a special aptitude for religious devotion. As soon, however, as the Church is recognized as the normal guardian of the spiritual life of a whole nation the character of its membership undergoes a complete change. The majority are born and grow up into their membership as a matter of course. To join the Church involves no break with a previous life, no momentous decision to embark upon a new one. The distinction between Church and world becomes increasingly blurred. No doubt to some extent the Church leavens the world, but inevitably also the world leavens the Church. It becomes more and more apparent that a large proportion of those who are outwardly the Church's members have no intention of entering with heart and soul into the inner sanctuary of the Church's life. They have the spirit, not of converts, but of conformists.

It is at this point that the great problem of institutional religion arises. How can the Church accept large numbers of heterogeneous humanity and yet withstand contamination of her spiritual ideals, a general lowering of her standards of faith and holiness? Mediæval Catholicism attempted to supply an answer. The Church must frankly make terms with the world. If she would preserve her ideals at all she must recognize that they are too lofty to be set before the majority of her members. She must authorize a twofold standard in ideals—the one for the few who can appreciate and strive after the highest, the other for the many whose aspirations must be limited to a sincere conformity. The Church must admit a distinction between esoteric and exoteric standards of life; she must, as it were, recognize a "pass" as well as an "honour school" in spiritual things. Thus she may hope to preserve the purity of the highest for the few, while she neither leaves the many outside her fold altogether, nor invites hypocrisy by professing to expect impossibilities.

It is in Buddhism that the gulf between the two circles of Church membership is widest. The spiritual mysticism of the true follower of Gautama is a totally different religion from popular Buddhism, as it is practised, for instance, among the Burmese. The Christian Church, just because of her Gospel, has never allowed the cleavage to be so strongly marked as this. Mediæval Catholicism at least made all Christ's people accept the same Creed and receive the same Sacraments. At its best, moreover, it always insisted on the duty retained by the inner circle towards the outer. A double standard of membership was authorized in principle only as a temporary expedient, so that the few might the better keep the purity of the Christian ideal, and so be better able in the end to

lead the many towards it. The doctrine of Purgatory supplied a means whereby those who had been confined to the outer courts on earth, might hereafter hope to penetrate into the sanctuary of the Temple. Nevertheless the clericalist system of Church government and organization—as it was conceived, for instance, by Hildebrand—was undoubtedly inspired by the conviction that it was necessary to recognize a double standard of Christian life. Roughly speaking, the clergy and "religious" formed the inner circle, the laity and those "in the world" the outer. Thus a Church was born within the Church, a "religious" life of select members within the religious life of the main body. The privilege and authority given to the clergy were simply a corollary from the stricter duties imposed upon them.

From such clericalism the Church of Rome has never really attempted to free herself. It has shown itself, it shows itself still, in every department of her activity, and everywhere it has involved that conception and use of authority which we have hitherto condemned. One result has already been noticed in the tendency of the clergy to direct the lives of the laity by a code of external precepts.

Still more striking has been the influence on the theory and administration of the Mass and on the applied theology of the Atonement. The underlying idea of clericalism has been that it is impossible to expect really Christlike life from the majority of Christians. Hence if the main body are to share at all the benefits of the sacrifice on the Cross, they must do so apart from the power which that sacrifice gives of sharing the life sacrificed. In other words, the sacrifice of the Cross assumes a vicarious instead of a representative character. Christ's manhood is held in

effect to have been offered as a substitute for that of ordinary men, so that they need not in like manner sacrifice themselves. It is no longer taught that Christ's manhood was offered simply as representative or inclusive of that of ordinary men, so that its own power of sacrifice might be made theirs. So with the sacrifice of the Mass as the continual re-presentation of the sacrifice of the Cross. It is not presented by priest and congregation together as the necessary preliminary to the sacramental communion of all with the offered life. It is rather presented vicariously by the priest in lieu of the congregation, and the communion of the priest alone is essential to the rite. Thus it becomes by no means foreign to the Roman conception of the liturgy that its language should be unintelligible to the people, and that the words in it which originally vindicated the people's rights and duty as equal participators with the priest, should be uttered by a server in a tone inaudible to the congregation.

There is no occasion for any harsh condemnation of clericalism or of the practices in which it has issued. They are a genuine attempt to solve a genuine problem. The solution which they offer sacrifices the spiritual equality of all Christ's members, it puts the priest between Christ and His people, it abandons the Pauline ideal of instructing every man in every wisdom, that every man may be presented perfect before God. Yet it is foolish to despise the temporary refuge which clericalism offers, until we have discovered a safer resting-place. Indeed, it was not the clericalist system itself which was the cause of the great reaction against Rome ; rather it was the corruption of the clergy, on whose holiness its whole working depended. When the clergy were lazy or venal, the power they wielded was

used to poison the very wells of spiritual grace, and the Reformation revolt was an inevitable consequence.

Unfortunately the Protestant reaction took a form which led simply to the ignoring of the problem solved by Rome at such a fearful cost. Protestantism indeed restored the immediate and equal access of all believers to God, but in so doing it has deprived itself of the capacity to form an institutional as opposed to a missionary Church. In opposition to the outward authority of priest and Sacraments in all that appertains to Christian life, Protestantism has set up the spiritual experience of the individual. But, for this reason, she has been unable to make sufficient allowance for the infinite variety of human nature, which in a Church for all sorts and conditions of men makes the sharing of one form of spiritual experience too narrow a basis for a catholic fellowship. Where Protestant bodies have been strongest their membership has been limited in practice to those whose religious experience takes one definite shape—viz. sensible conversion, or the *feeling* of salvation obtained in the atoning blood of Christ.

By thus limiting her membership Protestantism has often given proof of a spiritual power which puts the Catholic Church to shame. But the moment she extends her appeal and seeks to incorporate large numbers of those who are not susceptible of conversion in the narrow sense, her weakness is apparent. Either the experience of conversion is produced in a spurious form by playing on the emotions, or it is claimed by those quite ignorant of what it means; or else the society is driven to seek some quite different bond of cohesion more or less foreign to the proper nature of religion. It is thus that the distressing phenomena of "political nonconformity" and the vague sentimen-

tality of Pleasant Sunday Afternoons are to be explained. They represent gropings after some visible bond of unity on the part of religious societies which lack the cohesive force of sacramental institutions universally enjoined, and yet seek to extend their membership to those whose religious experience is not of the type they recognize.

In result Protestant Churches have been strongest as missionary societies; wherever the Gospel seed is cast on a more or less virgin soil, or even where worldliness has choked and killed a previous growth, there Protestantism flourishes in the vivid inward experience which its new message excites in those who are naturally responsive to its appeal. But it lacks the power to hold together large masses of heterogeneous mankind in a stable society, so that they continue to grow together into holiness when the first impulse of enthusiasm is spent. Protestantism represents one type only of Christian life, one aspect of the fullness of Christian perfection, and it can provide a permanent home only for those whose peculiar temperament its one-sidedness satisfies. To preserve the intensity of its spiritual life Protestantism must confine its membership to "converts." It can find no room for those whose natural feelings are not religious in the narrower sense of the word. But the majority of mankind have to learn religious loyalty before they can begin to appreciate religious experience. This is the rock of psychological fact on which the sacramental system of the Catholic Church is founded. Protestantism has ignored it; and though it often emphasizes particular Sacraments as useful means of stimulating spiritual experience, its whole conception of religion remains in principle purely spiritual, mystical, and non-sacramental in character. If a man believes himself to have had

the experience of salvation, there can be in Protestantism no reason why any further belief or practice should be required of him which he does not himself feel to be immediately profitable to his soul's health. If, on the other hand, he cannot claim that experience, he has no real right to membership in the Body of Christ. Thus Protestantism has re-established the equality of believers at the expense of that inclusiveness which must at least be one mark of a truly Catholic Church.

The original English Reformers who were responsible for the First English Prayer Book were neither Protestants nor Romanists. In all their work we can trace the endeavour to retain the full sacramental system of the Church, and at the same time to eliminate that double standard of membership which clericalism had introduced. They stood for no half-hearted compromise, but for a true *via media*; they were seeking after a Church capable of leading all sorts and conditions of men in equal fellowship along the one path of Christian holiness. Perhaps this is rather too ideal a picture of their aim; but it is not inconsistent with the main characteristics of their work, and that is all that matters to the present argument.

The bulwark of clericalism was the barrier which shut out the laity from their full and equal share in the Eucharistic offering. The unintelligibility of the language used in the liturgy, the rarity of lay Communion,* the withholding of the Cup, were all symbols of inequality containing the suggestion of the false doctrine that the sacrifice of the Mass was something offered vicariously on the laity's behalf, in which the

* In quite recent years frequency of communion has been greatly encouraged among the Roman laity, whose practice in this respect now compares very favourably with that of the Anglican.

people was not holy enough to take an equal share. Every one of these inequalities the liturgy of 1549 scrupulously removed. Yet the essential character of the rite as the continual re-presentation, by the faithful through the priest, of the one sacrifice offered on the Cross was just as carefully retained. The great difference between the Roman Mass and the English Mass of 1549 lies, not in the attributing or denying of a sacrificial character to the service, but in the fact that the English Mass insists on the truly representative nature both of the sacrifice once made and of its continual presentation, whereas the Roman Mass as practised lent a vicarious character to both.

If the Manhood of Christ offered on the Cross be truly representative and inclusive of all humanity, then there can be no question but that the offering of it on the Cross was " the one full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." All suggestion that a further sacrifice is required in the Mass inevitably disappears. But again, if Christ offered on the Cross be the atoning representative of men, they can only seek to share His life by presenting the offering of humanity which He made ; and conversely, they can only truly present that offering if they are seeking to make Christ actually their representative by entering into and sharing His life which was offered. Thus we reach the true reconciliation between the complementary aspects of sacrifice and communion in the Eucharist. It is this reconciliation which the 1549 liturgy so unerringly sets forth. The moment the priest has made the memorial and presentation of the sacrifice of Christ he explicitly identifies himself and the people with it in the prayer of oblation wherein " we offer ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice "

to God; and this identification of the people with Christ in intention anticipates and leads up to the act of Communion in which the identification is made by God's grace a reality in deed.

In practice the Roman Mass had suggested that it was possible for the laity to have a share in the benefits of the Passion without making the effort required by the attempt to enter into Christ's own self-sacrifice and so hold communion with His life. The Mass was therefore a bulwark of that false kind of authority which we have throughout been criticizing, and its corollaries were the unknown tongue and the exclusion of the people from their full share in the service, which were the signs of the laity's inferior holiness. Against this whole system the Prayer Book of 1549 set its English Canon leading up to the communion of the people, and the unity of that Canon was the one unmistakable witness borne by the English Church against the characteristic error of Rome. According to this rite all must strive in will and intention to share the sacrifice which they present; and in answer to the fullest effort which the Holy Spirit enables them to make, the life sacrificed is indeed communicated to them, and with it the supply of every need.

Thus the Reformers distinguished their stewardship of the Sacraments from that of Rome. Their aim, however, shows no tinge of Protestantism beyond the restoration of the rights and duties of the laity. They retained the Mass with Communion as the central and characteristic act of Christian worship for all believers. Hereby they made it clear that in corporate and sacramental act, rather than in individual and spiritual experience, all without distinction find fellowship with Christ. They by no means denied the value of salvation experienced in feeling, but they recognized that

a universal communion cannot be made to depend upon such a variable element in human nature. Their view of the essential communion of the believer with Christ was not really less spiritual than the Protestant, but it was more objective. By maintaining the outward as well as the inward aspect of communion they bore witness that its essence depended on will and act rather than on feeling, and thus they found an equal place in the Christian body for those upon whom the precious gift of feeling Christ had as yet been bestowed only in very small degree. By means of the Sacrament the full mystery of holiness in thought, feeling, and act together was kept to focus the efforts of all who were trying by any way to enter into it.

Unfortunately it was impossible that the ideal of the first Prayer Book should determine the development of the English Church. The sixteenth century was an era of religious revolution, and in revolutions it is never the sober middle course which prevails. Always the extremists gain ascendancy; and if the extremists on neither side prove strong enough to get their own way, the upshot of confusion is a compromise in which no clear principles are embodied. Inevitably, therefore, the Elizabethan Settlement was too much of a compromise, too little of a reconciliation. In the strife of contending parties there were but few minds which grasped and held firmly to the first principles of the English Reformation. The Church of England as established under Elizabeth was designed first of all to unite the main body of the English people, and the Protestant doctrine, which had obtained a temporary triumph in 1552, was still too strong to allow a whole-hearted return to the earlier conception of a reformed Catholicism. The principles of the latter were never worked out into the organized constitution of a Church.

The liturgy was left in the illogical order which Protestant prejudice had given it. In itself this was a matter of small importance. But, unfortunately, Roman abuses and the Protestant reaction against them had undermined the whole authority of the Sacraments as the mainspring of the Church's life. The laity used its new-found freedom to neglect the privilege of sacramental communion which the Reformation had restored to it. The Communion service inevitably drifted from the foreground into the background of Christian worship. It came to be regarded as a privilege reserved for the pious few, as an inner sanctuary of worship into which ordinary people could only be suffered to enter at very rare intervals. It never was reintroduced as the normal sustenance of the Christian soul. Hence those whose inward experience failed to keep them in the narrow path of piety lost touch with the mystery of Christian holiness altogether, and lapsed contentedly into conventional standards of good life.

Meanwhile the position of the clergy in the Reformed Church was never clearly defined. All reformers agreed in desiring to remove the existing inequality of status between clergy and laity, and therefore in depriving the clergy of those powers which they had wielded as the inner circle of the Church and as a caste intervening between the Head and the general Body of the faithful. Therefore in all matters of government and administration (as distinct from directly spiritual functions) supreme authority was taken out of clerical hands and placed in those of the laity represented by Crown and Parliament.

Many Protestants, however, went much further than this and sought to minimize the importance of the special function of the clergy as specially trained and

consecrated members within the body. In other words, they tried as far as possible to assimilate clergy to laity and to remove all distinction between them. The first English Prayer Book had seemed to insist with as great emphasis as the mediæval Church on the special task of the clergy as ordained ministers of the Word and Sacraments. It removed inequality of status, but it retained differentiation of function. The clergy were to be the equals of the laity, but their distinctive duties remained, and demanded imperatively all the significance of special training and solemn Ordination. The priest was not holier than the layman ; yet the priestly office was holier than any lay calling, just because the priest in his office acted in a special sense as representative of the laity, on whom equally the spiritual priesthood of the Head had been conferred. The whole body was therefore responsible for training and setting apart certain members through whom in its priestly capacity it must act. Such is the essential doctrine underlying our Prayer Book Ordinals. But Protestant influence in the intensity of reaction against Rome diverted the Church from a full carrying out of its principles. From the beginning fear of priestly power hindered the proper training of the clergy for their special work, and the distinctive and honourable position of the clergy, in so far as it endured at all, was maintained chiefly by the survival of a clericalist tradition in the popular mind.*

The laity meanwhile, with whom rested the real power of government, gave increasing evidence of their incapacity and unwillingness to undertake the task.

* This, however, is conspicuously inapplicable to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, whose assiduous care in the training of her clergy has been an example disastrously ignored by other Reformed Communions.

Their interest in religion, quickened by the first breach of the Papal yoke and the intellectual revolution which it involved, soon died away. Like the absentee landlord of an estate, the laity of England has left the actual management of its property in the hands of its servants the clergy, and has steadily refused either to renounce its ownership or to secure fitness and efficiency in its delegates. To-day we find in control of the Church a Parliament of which only a small fraction claims any membership in her body, while those who elect Parliament, and through it rule the Church, complain bitterly of clerical incompetence without even being aware that the ultimate responsibility rests with them.

§ 3. Further Remarks on the Present Failure of Anglicanism

It is impossible to appreciate the practical difficulties and deficiencies of modern Anglicanism, or to see clearly the true line of reform, until we have first understood how the original aims of the English Reformation have been obscured and confused almost from the beginning. The ideal of a Catholic-democratic Church centring in the Sacraments may still be our hope in the future; it has not been our guide in the past.

In recent years perhaps the most disastrous, certainly the most often quoted, failure of the Church of England has been her incapacity to take any firm stand concerning questions of social morality in the widest sense of the term. In spite of much goodwill and even zeal on the part of many of her members, she has as a body appeared to acquiesce in social evils which before the war had not only brought the country to the brink

of revolution, but had made the social system itself intolerable in a nation professing Christianity. The Church's position in the country could only be excused by the argument that her primary concern was the conversion of individual souls, and that therefore social reform and politics generally were outside the sphere of her operations. But those who urged this plea often failed to perceive that their argument plainly demanded at least the disestablishment of the Church; for its logical issue was to reduce the Church to the level of an independent association of Christians who, having no immediate connexion with the life of the nation, could on that ground disclaim responsibility for national sins.

For the Roman Catholics and other Nonconformist bodies such a position would both have been tenable in theory and have provided a workable policy. The Roman Church through its priests could give to its members the best rules of conduct possible in the circumstances, and then claim that the Church had done all she could. The Nonconformist conscience (which, in spite of its unfortunate association with party politics, may be a most genuine power on the side of righteousness) enables its possessors to maintain that, when they as individuals have followed its dictates, nothing further can be required of them. But the national Establishment of the Church of England compelled her in theory to accept a much wider responsibility; and yet in practice neither could her clergy give any clear direction as to how Christians should combat social sins, or at least avoid participation in their guilt, nor did the conscience of individual Anglicans produce any public opinion capable of effective influence.

The causes of this tragic impotence spring from the

fact that the Church of England has all along been founded on a mere compromise, not on any clear conception of the nature and function of the Christian Church. If the main body of English Churchmen had been kept in effectual touch with the Sacraments they would have been filled with a moral fervour infinitely stronger than any obedience to a priestly code, and much wider and more unifying than the uneven and often eccentric workings of the individual conscience. If the clergy had been trained for their special task they could have taught that moral fervour how to express itself and to make itself effective upon those broad national problems which require scientific knowledge as well as sincere piety for their solution. But the Church of England had been halting too long between the two opinions of Romanism and Protestantism to be able in the hour of need to express any clear judgment of her own or to give her members an authoritative lead along any definite path of action. Thus, the failure of the Church of England to bear a clear moral witness really springs from her failure to grasp and to deal with the problem of institutional religion which we have been discussing in the last section.

Does the Church of England set one and the same standard of perfect holiness before all her members? In theory, yes. We have repudiated in principle the clericalism which sets up a holy caste above the equality of all faithful people. In practice, nevertheless, our failure to exercise any authority not only suffers but encourages the majority of our members to remain content with standards of life much lower even than that represented by Roman rules of conformity. This anomaly is bound up with our method of administering the Sacraments. In defiance of our Prayer Book we

habitually baptize children without requiring any real pledge that they are to be brought up as members of Christ. After a brief period of utterly inadequate religious instruction, occasionally terminated by Confirmation, these children drift away from all outward connexion with the life of the Church. Usually they return to us only for marriage, for the baptism of their own children, and for burial. On these occasions we appear to bestow on them the fullest privileges of Church membership with never a hint of the duties they are neglecting, without heed that the sacred words of the rites which we use are for them practically meaningless. We have indeed preserved something of that atmosphere of reverence and awe which forbid a similarly light use of the Communion service itself; but in order to do so we have scrupulously severed its ancient connexion with the rites ministered to the mass of the people. Thus our people in fact live by a standard of conformity laxer than any of which Rome has dreamed, and all evidence that they have never entered into vital membership of the Church is carefully withdrawn from their attention. We do for them simply the little that they ask, and encourage them to profess and call themselves Christians without giving them any idea of what that profession must imply. In result large masses of the people are fatally familiar with the language of a religion the meaning of which they have never grasped. They have become, as it were, inoculated with the germs of a faith the real force of which they never feel, and they are thereby rendered almost completely immune from the infection of a definite Christianity. They are not stimulated to feel salvation by the preaching of the Protestant Gospel; they are not required to observe any definite rule of conformity, obedience to which would at least

involve some effort of the will; still less are they led by the sacramental path into the true mystery of Christian living. They are allowed to be content with the forms of baptism, marriage, and burial, which too often minister only to the superstitions of innately pagan minds. Surely such a use of authority in regard to Christian life is the most complete means of saving trouble which any Christian community has yet devised.

Let us pass on to consider the position of the clergy. What is their status and function in the Church of England to-day? In theory we have rejected the view that they are intermediaries between Christ the Head and the main body of His people. The clear witness to this fact has already been noticed in the constitution of our Church. Nominally the supreme government rests with the laity; to the clergy by themselves belongs only the ministration of spiritual things. Yet the facts that this ministration belongs to them exclusively and that they are specially trained and solemnly set apart for its exercise, differentiate our position from the Protestantism which recognizes only a prophetic ministry exercised on the authority of the spiritual experience of the individual minister himself. Neither in temporal nor in spiritual things are our clergy a governing caste. They are equal members with a particular function, which is specially holy and important, only because it involves in a special sense the co-operation of the whole body. In relation to the laity the priest is at once an expert in a special task, and an officer appointed for the whole society as its representative. The functions of the priesthood are the teaching of the faith, the administration of the Sacraments, and the care or direction of souls. Christian holiness and the setting of a Christian example

are certainly demanded of the priest, but not of the priest alone; this duty is shared equally by every member of the body.

Such in theory is our doctrine. In practice the status of the clergy is determined almost entirely by Protestant and clericalist prejudices which conflict both with our ostensible theory and with one another. Protestantism tends to deny to the priest his official capacity and special function in the body. We have surrendered to this view by a neglect to train our clergy which would otherwise be quite inexplicable. Clericalism meanwhile is rampant among us, less in the teaching and practice of our extreme "High Churchmen" than in the popular identification of the Church with the clergy, and the persistent demand that the clergy should live by a stricter standard of holiness than the laity. Thus, while the popular view of the clergy is in the main clericalistic, our surrender to Protestantism in the matter of clergy-training has rendered our priests incapable alike of living up to popular demands and of combating them with a truer doctrine.

An interesting example of the confusion of our ideas on this subject is to be found in the arguments which were most often heard in the course of the controversy whether the clergy should or should not be allowed to enter the army as combatants for the period of the war. A few convinced clericalists thought that it was wrong for the clergy to shed blood, thereby at once admitting that there were different standards of holiness for different classes in the Christian Church. On the other hand, those who opposed clerical exemption usually did so on the ground that, if the clergy were exempted, the Church would not be making the sacrifice which was due from her. As a rule this

argument rested on two distinct assumptions belonging essentially to clericalism: (1) that the clergy were the Church; and (2) that the duty of the clergy was simply and solely to be better Christians than the laity, and that consequently they must make precisely the same sacrifice as the laity, if possible in a greater degree. But the same conclusion against clerical exemption was often reached from the essentially Protestant assumption that the priesthood has no real *raison d'être* as a special order at all, and that therefore, when men in other avocations were leaving their work, *a fortiori* the clergy should be the first to leave theirs. The one view hardly ever expressed was that the clergy were officers with a special function, the need for which was as great in war as in peace, and that therefore, like the doctors, they should not be taken away from their work, but mobilized so as to perform it more effectually in the new conditions.

One may perhaps be excused for lingering over the unsatisfactory position of the clergy to-day. In its causes and in its remedy the obvious anomaly of it is all-important for our present study. It is a singular fact that whereas in the English Church there is far less differentiation of clerical from lay education than in any other Christian body, the clergy are nevertheless less well understood by the laity in the English Church than anywhere else in the world. An intangible but terribly effective barrier of self-consciousness and consequent misunderstanding on both sides mars the whole of that free and friendly intercourse between priest and layman, which ought surely to have been the chief benefit derived from a frank acknowledgment of the equal status of both. But the explanation of the apparent paradox is not far to seek. It lies simply in the fact that there is no clear mutual understanding

as to the position which the priest occupies in the body, or as to the nature of his office.

The layman looks at the priest through the atmosphere of a clericalist tradition, which remains because it has never been dispelled by an alternative doctrine. He is dimly aware that this tradition is not really in accord with the Anglican system, but it is the only reason he knows for the priest's existence. The priest, on the other hand, is equally uncertain of his ground. He knows, perhaps subconsciously, that he is occupying in the layman's eyes a place which he has never been trained to fill. Sometimes, in order to live up to what he dimly feels to be a false position, he resorts to artificialities of clerical manner and address, which are only too transparent. Sometimes, in order to remove the layman's false presuppositions, he abandons priestliness altogether and endeavours to be the simple layman with a zeal and thoroughness which a real layman would never approach. The result, on the whole, is indisputably that the Christian people of England do not as a rule go to their clergy for help and guidance in their difficulties and doubts.

Of course, there are many English priests who exert a really deep spiritual influence on those who come in contact with them. They do so because they are born priests who by the grace of God cannot help being pastors. Their official status, and such technical training as they have received, are often rather a hindrance than a help to them. The intelligent layman bears unconscious witness to the failure of the clergy as a whole when he lays it down that the first and greatest thing to be required in a priest is "personality." He does not see that in these words he brings the severest indictment which he could frame against the English priesthood. And the indictment

is tragically true. Because of the lack of system, because of the absence of any clear conception of the priest's place and function in the body, the best priests can do little more than attach a number of followers to themselves. A very few of these they really bring to God and establish as members of His Church; the vast majority "lapse," they slip away the moment the influence of the personality is removed.

There is this much truth in the ridiculous suggestion of certain extreme Socialists, that the clergy are the tools of the property-owning class, whose chief use is to keep the proletariat in proper subjection to its masters. The insistence on genial personality as the one thing needful for a priest is evidence of an underlying instinct that the task of the clergy is to make men happy and content with the spiritual condition of themselves and of the world as they are, rather than to point out steep and difficult roads of repentance and reform. Thus, whatever point of view we take, our consideration of the position of the clergy brings us back again to the recognition of the same false use of Church authority, to save trouble instead of stimulating effort. Popular clericalism demands that the clergy should be good instead of the people. Popular sentiment asks, further, that the clergy should be the kind of people to make others content with this state of affairs.

PART II

PRESENT AND FUTURE

CHAPTER I

SELF-GOVERNMENT THE PRESUPPOSITION OF REFORM

In the foregoing chapters we have indulged in what is perhaps rather harsh criticism of the English Church. We have tried to show how in her stewardship alike of faith and of holiness she has failed to strike clearly what we believe to be the keynotes of a free and democratic Catholicism. Instead she has drifted into a series of compromises. She has halted perpetually between two opinions instead of firmly pursuing a middle course, with the result that in practice she displays many of the defects both of Romanism and of Protestantism without their corresponding merits. Yet our criticism has not been a mere condemnation. For we have criticized the Church of England only by the standard of what we believe to be truly her own ideals; and if we really believe in those ideals as hers, we must hope that she among all the Churches of Christendom possesses the best opportunity of pointing out the true path of Catholic progress. The one need is that she should visualize her ideals afresh and reorganize herself to pursue them.

The essential presupposition of all reform is the self-government of the Church. In regard to the manner of her government the ideal theory of the English Church conflicts most obviously with the actual facts of her position. In theory, as we have seen,

she is already, not only a self-governing body, but a body which governs itself on thoroughly democratic principles. This is the theoretic significance of Parliamentary control. Its practical effect, however, is in a precisely opposite direction. The mass of Members of Parliament and of the people who elect them are quite ignorant of and indifferent to the questions which most vitally concern the Church's life. Parliament, therefore, does not govern the Church; its authority is merely an obstacle to all change. The Church of England is not really governed at all; for the only authority which has the power to govern, lacks the will. So far as government in these circumstances is possible at all, it is exercised by the Bishops and clergy in their capacity as administrative officials. Therefore the Church of England is often attacked as a clerically governed body. Yet even in point of fact, the power of the clergy to govern is confined within very narrow limits. Not only are they always restricted by the tremendous *vis inertiæ* of the sovereign Parliament, but external influences are constantly introduced by the fact that the highest clerical officials, including all the Bishops, are appointed by the Prime Minister on behalf of the Crown. These appointments are made, therefore, not in order to give expression to clerical opinion, but with the general purpose that the highest officials in the Church may represent the views and command the respect of the largest possible number of people.

In certain directions the whole system works extraordinarily well. The oppression of minorities is made quite impossible. For not only has no party, however large or small its numbers, any means of enforcing its will, but if a minority has any substantial, or even noisy, body of adherents, it is pretty certain of securing

some representation in official circles. But there is one grave danger in the complete immunity which the Church of England enjoys from any form of party government. Systematic reform, i.e. one which would give coherent expression in different departments of the Church's life to one clearly conceived idea, is utterly beyond the range of practical politics. Whenever some measure of reform—doctrinal, liturgical, educational, or even financial—is so urgently needed that some practical step has to be taken, only one procedure is at present possible. A Committee is appointed, representing in about equal proportions the different "schools of thought" in the Church, with a strictly limited reference to consider the immediate problem; and after due deliberation the proposals which embody the highest common factor of their agreement are recommended for adoption.

This method is usually attacked because the obstacle of Parliamentary control makes it so very difficult to carry into effect the Committee's recommendation. The result of the proceedings is apt to be filed for the consideration of the next Committee. This is, however, not the really inherent defect of the plan. The fundamental objection to it is the fact that whatever represents on any departmental subject the highest common factor of agreement between the present parties in the Church, cannot possibly embody any clear principles of Churchmanship, and must inevitably consist in a compromise between principles radically opposed to each other. Take as an example the question of the Prayer Book. A Committee is set up composed of "Catholic," Evangelical, Central, and Liberal elements in, roughly, equal proportions. Everything must be sacrificed in order to obtain a more or less unanimous report, and doctrinal questions are outside the Com-

mittee's reference and cannot be even discussed. If, therefore, all the parties except one do not consent to abandon without discussion almost all their doctrinal principles, obviously the only changes in the Prayer Book which the Committee can recommend must be of strictly non-doctrinal significance. Such changes may in themselves be most desirable, but obviously they cannot be real liturgical reforms, if by that phrase we mean changes whereby the general principles of the Church's teaching may be better reflected and expressed in her system of worship. The plain truth is that almost all important proposals for change in the Prayer Book—e.g. those connected with the Holy Communion, Baptism, Marriage, and Burial Services—immediately raise doctrinal questions, and prima facie the doctrinal difference between the various parties is so great that a Committee, which represents them all and may not even discuss doctrine, is bound, however revolutionary its intentions, to leave things more or less as they are.

The weakest point in the scheme of the National Mission Committees is the apparent ignoring of the fact that no systematic reforms can possibly be proposed by a number of separate Committees representing various parties and appointed with departmental references. The Church of England must reform herself, if at all, as the representative of a whole ideal, so that a certain position in doctrine corresponds to a certain method of worship, a certain system of government, and even a certain organization of finance. If the views of the different parties at present comprised within the Church are so divergent as to make impossible a unanimous reform of this type, then the will of the majority must be given some power to make itself effective, and minorities must suffer more than

they have done in the past. If there is no unanimity, to safeguard minorities too carefully is to produce a deadlock which makes all change impossible. However the question of the franchise in a self-governing Church be determined, the effect of freedom from State control would undoubtedly be to give the majority of real members of the Church more power than it has at present. It is this undeniable fact which to some minds constitutes the chief argument for the retention of State control, and to others makes the removal of that control the one essential preliminary to reform.

The risk of self-government for the Church is obvious. Opposition to it comes naturally from those who admire the present inclusion in the Church of England of mutually incompatible theories of the Church, and who fear another schism in her body as the worst of all conceivable disasters. Undoubtedly a schism would be a disaster, and there is real danger of it as the result of self-government. Yet pertinent questions may be asked of those who would retain State control in order to avoid the danger. Are they sure of averting a schism in any case? And, if so, may there not be worse evils even than a schism? Is not a totally paralysed body more useless than one which has lost a limb?

Self-government must be a venture of faith. Yet there are reasons for thinking that the danger of schism, if we do not allow it to deter us from the venture, may prove less formidable than we are apt to imagine. Our fears are due in great part to the tendency to rebel against authority which of late has been distressingly obvious among certain sections of the clergy. If the present conspicuously even-handed and non-partisan regime scarcely restrains them from open defiance, how will they fare if a party other than

their own gain the ascendancy? The reasoning is plausible, but perhaps rather short-sighted. At present the resentment felt by extremists on all sides against the authority which would restrain them, is greatly aggravated by the fact that the authority cannot support itself by any appeal to a coherent and recognized body of Church principles. At present if a Bishop feels constrained to take action against any priest who, for example, reserves the Sacrament for adoration, celebrates without communicants, teaches the invocation of the Virgin and the Saints, denies by implication historic facts in the Creeds, explains away the Incarnation, is negligent in the celebration of the Sacraments, or refuses to hear confessions, he is compelled to act on what seems to be merely his own personal interpretation of Anglican principles. If he appeals to Articles or to Prayer Book, it is always possible to point to other transgressions of these formularies which are allowed to pass unnoticed. If he contends that Benediction is an obvious contravention of Articles 25 and 28, he may be asked why he not only permits, but probably himself holds, a view of Biblical inspiration which the authors of the Articles only failed to condemn because they never even dreamt that a professing Christian could adopt it. If changes in faith and doctrine are allowed, why are experiments in liturgical practice forbidden? In reply the Bishop can only state what he personally regards as permissible and not permissible in the English Church, and it is only in some cases that he can claim even the rather nebulous support afforded by a unanimous decision of the Upper House of Convocation. No doubt the Bishop is the only "lawful authority," and any priest who defies his ruling should find his conduct hard to reconcile with his Ordination vow. Yet the fact

remains that the position of the Bishop would be enormously strengthened and his disciplinary action accepted with far less sense of grievance, if there were any public recognized and coherent statement of the principles on which episcopal authority were exercised both in faith and practice.

The only formularies of our Church are centuries out of date. What is or is not permissible both in faith and practice, has therefore become practically a matter of private arrangement between a Bishop and his priests. The method has many advantages, but the lack of loyalty in the Church of England is largely due to the fact that there are no longer any published principles to which the loyalty of all is admittedly due. If it were only possible to state what the Church of England requires as a coherent system, the whole character of Anglican loyalty might undergo a change. All but intransigeant Romanizers and Modernists (very possibly a quite insignificant number) might be able to recognize, not perhaps an ideal statement of their own views, but at least a definite standing-ground on which they could meet, and a position which they could join in defending; and in order to make common cause they might well be willing to give up certain practices, and to cease to claim authorization for certain doctrines to which their own opinions would incline them. No one, of course, would wish any man to do violence to his conscience, but for the sake of a definite unity a man may reasonably and rightly make concessions which otherwise he would not consider justifiable.*

Plainly, such a unity cannot come within the range of practical politics as long as Parliamentary control

* The "northward position" might be a case in point, and the ceremonial use of incense.

is maintained. It would be a great deal worse than useless for the Bishops to put forth any statement of principles of the kind suggested, or to attempt to authorize any changes in accordance with those principles, until (1) the support of a strong majority of Church people may fairly be counted on, and (2) the measures in question have the force of law for the Church. The present Parliamentary control is a complete bar to the fulfilment of either condition. For neither has the general mind of the Church any recognized organ of expression in any representative assembly, nor have the decisions of the Church assemblies which do exist any binding authority. Those, therefore, who desire to bring about any reform of the Church in the sense we have given to that term, must press the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on Church and State as a minimum requirement.

Self-government, therefore, must be risked. But, of course, the ultimate value of self-government will depend on the use to which it is put. It is idle to talk as though self-government were in itself a panacea for all the ills the Church of England is heir to. Self-government may release us from the prison of State control only to plunge us into a strife of ecclesiastical parties, the horrors of which it is only too easy to imagine. How can such a disaster be prevented? Only if, in the interval before self-government is put to the test of actuality, Church people make themselves ready to use it by trying to arrive at some principles, which by commanding the assent of the overwhelming majority may forge a link strong enough to bear the inevitable strain of freedom. Differences of opinion within limits and free expression of these differences, are a healthy sign of life which should never be absent from a democratically governed community; but

where no common principles are recognized, discussion must inevitably degenerate into dispute, and dispute issue in disruption. We must be wise in time. Is it utterly Utopian to believe in the possibility of stating the principles of a central English Catholicism in such a way as to rally to its standard the vast mass of fundamentally loyal Church members, when once the opportunity for reform has actually come? At least the possibility should be considered before it is dismissed. It is in order to assist such consideration that some sketch is here given of the manner in which the principles we have so far indicated in the abstract might work out into concrete measures of reform. The attempt may provide at least a basis for criticism.

We have found our guiding principle in the idea that the Church holds authority as the living steward of the eternal mysteries of truth and holiness revealed in the Gospel facts of the Incarnation and the Atonement. In this conception of a stewardship of a mystery lies the ideal reconciliation between authority and freedom. Dogma recalls and inspires the efforts of man's mind to inquire into the mystery of truth; the Sacraments recall and empower the efforts of man's life to enter into the mystery of holiness. It is the function of the whole Christian society, acting through its commissioned officers, the Bishops and clergy, to administer dogma and Sacrament in such a way that they may best fulfil their purpose. What are the main reforms needed, if we would give this ideal system some effective embodiment?

CHAPTER II

REFORM IN THE STEWARDSHIP OF TRUTH

Our first requirement is a fresh formulation of dogma, which shall state in relation to modern heresies that which the Church of England regards as *de fide* in the truth of Christian revelation. We have already suggested that the extraordinary ignorance and confusion as to the meaning of Christianity, which reign both within and without the Church, and not least in the most professedly intellectual quarters, are due to the failure of the Church to use dogma so as to keep the real problem of Christ before the human mind. That problem consists in the fact that through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ His Eternal Son, God took up normal manhood, which sin had depraved, into union with Himself. All "explanations" and diluted forms of Christianity, which make out the revelation of Christ to be anything other than this, destroy the mystery of the Gospel, and ought not to be heard on the lips of those whom the Church has commissioned to teach it. The first emphasis in any modern statement of dogma must inevitably be laid on the necessity of belief in the historic facts of our Lord's incarnate life. It is perhaps worth while for our present purpose to point out why this is so, and how the manner of the statement should be affected by the circumstances which have made it necessary.

The traditional faith of the Incarnation and Atone-

ment was naturally handed down to the nineteenth century as a complex of historic fact and theological doctrine. That century of intellectual ferment saw the older orthodoxy assailed from two opposite quarters by antagonists who were not long in coming to grips also with each other.

(1) The followers of Ritschl developed a school of thought loosely known in its wider range as Liberal Protestantism, the most representative and persuasive spokesmen of which are the Germans, Harnack and W. Herrmann. This school sought to retain the main historic facts of the Gospel narrative, while they discounted its theological implications, which they regarded as mere value-judgments, i.e. purely man-made and subjective estimates of what the goodness of Jesus Christ was worth to the human soul. They tended to reject miracle as bringing our Lord's life into too close a connexion with doubtful propositions of theology, but on the ethical purity of His person and teaching they insisted with uncompromising force. Their conception of Christianity was severely ethical, unmystical, and rationalistic in tone; and those who taught it naturally allied themselves with the criticism which accepted the authenticity of the moral teaching of the Gospels, while discrediting those passages in which our Lord seemed to make supernatural claims. Liberal Protestantism therefore had a Unitarian tendency, and where it did not issue in complete Unitarianism, it nevertheless conceived our Lord rather as a moral superman than as God in manhood. Beyond indicating the parallel which this doctrine presents to certain aspects of Arianism, we need not discuss it further. Its essential bias survives in the view of the plain man who cannot understand why the Church should not preach a frankly human Christ,

and cease to complicate the Gospel with theological technicalities. In the intellectual world Liberal Protestants have been practically beaten off the field by the other assailants of orthodoxy.*

(2) These latter are the Modernists, strictly so called, i.e. the school of thought which claims Loisy, Tyrrell, and Schweitzer as its pioneers. Loisy and Schweitzer in the sphere of criticism gained a notable victory over Harnack by strongly defending the genuineness of the apocalyptic and supernatural elements in our Lord's teaching and personal claims. Practically they accepted the dilemma *Aut deus aut homo non bonus*, and supposed that our Lord was led by the religious atmosphere in which He lived to make extravagant prophecies and pretensions which the event did not bear out. In their opinion the ethical elements in His teaching were of comparatively minor importance for the understanding of His character and work. The historical basis of the Christian revelation was thus practically undermined; but the theologians of this school, especially Tyrrell, tried hard to show that the essentially spiritual and theological truth of Christianity need not therefore collapse. They strove to maintain the Church's doctrine of the divine-human Word of God apart from its association with the particular man Jesus. Hence the severance between the Christ of faith and the Christ of fact, round which so much recent controversy has centred. The upshot has been an extraordinary recrudescence of Gnosticism in a modern form. The historic facts of the Christian Creed have been represented as the bursting husk

* This is perhaps an exaggeration while the Dean of St. Paul's has still so much to say on its side, but even he criticizes the Ritschlians for underestimating the importance of mystical communion with the Spirit of Jesus (*Modern Churchman*, Sept. 1917, p. 273).

round a kernel of spiritual truth which now for the first time stands revealed. The modern believer can afford to leave criticism to the archæologist, and is free to welcome a religion of brotherhood and self-sacrifice which, standing on its own feet of spiritual experience, has no need to lean on the doubtful issues of vexed controversies about distant events. This religion, invested with all the glamour of intellectual freedom and of mystic insight into the spiritual world, is the living heresy which has now to be faced by the Church of Christ.

It seems that there are only two types of religion capable of making a permanent appeal to the higher instincts of mankind—that which exalts the spiritual at the expense of the material, and that which incorporates the material into the spiritual. The first is most obviously exemplified in the mystics of all times and countries, who have found in their inward experience, shut off from the outer world, the one true knowledge of God which consists in spiritual union with Him. The same general type of religion does, however, take a more intellectual and less strictly empirical form in the philosophy of those who in their preoccupation with vast and cosmic processes ignore or undervalue the infinite particularity and separate importance of actual individuals, events, and things. Their intellectual megalomania exalts what are in fact abstractions—Will, Law, or Mind—so far above all the concrete realities of earth that these latter become mere specimens, cases, or examples of great cosmic principles, and thereby lose their proper and particular meaning. There are minds which are unable to generalize except at the expense of the particular. The idea of a God who cares for individuals as such, reveals Himself uniquely in particular historic events,

or founds one special outward society, is utterly alien from their whole habit of thinking. To them such a conception is essentially materialistic; for materialism is involved in the whole attempt to set God over against or outside the world, since He is thus Himself endowed with a certain particularity. These thinkers are the apostles of a spiritual religion of immanence, in the view of which God is simply the general soul and inner cause of the world-process itself, and only, therefore, to be truly known by those minds which are capable of such extremely general conceptions. They are willing to speak of a diffused Incarnation, of the whole process of evolution as a self-expression and self-realization of God; but the ideas of God incarnate in a particular man, of His Kingdom embodied in one earthly society, of His presence imparted in one appointed rite, are utterly abhorrent to them. They do not see that through this abhorrence they really deny to the particular, the outward, and the material, their true importance in the scheme of things, and that their supreme reality has in the long run become indistinguishable from a mental abstraction.

Utterly different from this over-refined spirituality is the sacramentalism of the Christian faith. For it the ultimate reality is never merely an abstract spiritual, but a universal embodied in a uniquely representative particular. The universal union of God with man is uniquely represented in the particular life of the prophet of Nazareth. The universal coming of the spiritual kingdom is uniquely represented in the particular mission of the divinely ordained society of the Catholic Church. The universal supply of divine grace is uniquely represented in the particular channels of the appointed Sacraments. Even in its teaching about the world to come Christianity retains the radical

concreteness of its sacramentalism. For the vague hope of a merely spiritual immortality it substitutes faith in a bodily resurrection—a life, that is, wherein all the value of earth's particularity is included and restored.

Whatever be the comparative merits of the two religions as metaphysical explanations of the world (and in this respect both are most obviously incomplete), the superiority of the Christian faith as a working Gospel is immediately apparent. By means of its insistence on the particular and the outward it gives an equal status, an equal promise, and an equal means of help to emperor and peasant, to monk and tradesman, to philosopher and van-boy. God's Son was Himself a carpenter, and it is in sharing the acts of a life as ordinary in circumstance and as unself-conscious as our Lord's, not primarily in the rapt ecstasy of the mystic's unitive way or in the cosmic meditations of an American professor, that the true eternal fellowship of man with God is to be sought and striven after and achieved. The hard saying which confounds the wise is the charter which exalts the simple.

Hence the need for an uncompromising insistence on the historic facts of the Incarnation and Atonement. The most distressing feature in the modern situation is the apparent failure of our intellectuals to see what transcendently important and appallingly definite issues are at stake. It is hardly too much to say that religion is at the parting of the ways, with spiritualism on the one hand and sacramentalism on the other. Yet some Liberal Churchmen are blandly eager to sacrifice in principle almost everything on which sacramentalism rests, while they exhibit only a pained surprise at the Bourbonesque obstinacy of those who venture to take a different view of the Church's duty. The

hopeless lack of mutual understanding was well illustrated in a recent controversy. A question was raised concerning the necessity of assenting to the Virgin Birth as a literal fact. A conservative bishop strongly affirmed the necessity. A liberal professor met him with the challenge that, as he could only accept the Ascension to the right hand of God, the Descent into Hell, and the Resurrection of the Body in a quasi-allegorical and non-literal sense, he had no right to object to the same principle of interpretation when applied to other clauses in the Creed. The bishop replied by drawing a firm distinction between propositions referring to the other world, which can only be roughly pictured in simile by human language, and propositions referring to the events of earth, which are capable of relatively exact statement. The professor's rejoinder was simply a denial of the validity of any such distinction. What is the effect of the denial? Surely it can only mean that in principle any historic statement of the Creed may by loyal Churchmen be interpreted in precisely the same allegorical and non-literal sense which we inevitably give to the Descent into Hell and to the sitting at the right hand of God. In principle, therefore, we are bound to admit that no belief in any particular historic facts is necessary to the Christian faith. The validity of this deduction is not at all impaired by the accident that certain historic facts stated in the Creed are not at present disputed by any sensible critics. It remains true that in principle the necessary connexion between Christian faith and historic fact is implicitly destroyed, and with it all that differentiates Christianity from its most dangerous modern rival and opponent. It is probably true that very few Liberal Churchmen really intend to make such a wholesale surrender of the

principles of the faith which they profess. But they are so preoccupied with their negations of the older orthodoxy that they do not see the need for maintaining any constructive position of their own. In their eagerness to attack the traditional theology they seize the weapons which lie readiest to their hands, and forget that all the while they are trusting to that theology to defend, not so much itself, as everything in their own faith which is really worth defending.

Hence the need for a fresh dogmatic statement, not to curb inquiry, but to recall the minds of controversialists to the consideration of the really fundamental issues. This can be done only by arraying those who really believe in the sacramental religion which gives to the historic, the outward, and the particular their proper place and value, against those who are honestly convinced that this type of theology should now give way to a more purely spiritual, abstract, and immanental faith.

If such, however, is really to be the dominating purpose of the dogmatic statement, care is obviously needed to draw the line so as to include, if possible, all those who are essentially adherents of what we have called sacramentalism. We have to reckon with the fact that many genuine and convinced upholders of the historic Incarnation and Atonement are nevertheless gravely doubtful about two facts which may justly be called derivative rather than primary in the Christian revelation, which have their place, as it were, rather on its circumference than at its centre, and remain at most deducible, not axiomatic, when the main truth of the historic revelation has been granted. The two facts referred to are, of course, the Virgin Birth and the physical Resurrection. (The latter term, though in general use, is rather misleading; for the

fact to which it refers is only historically definable in the negative statement that our Lord's mortal body saw no corruption in the grave.) However earnest be our certitude of the ultimate necessity of these facts, it is undeniably true, not only that the Church of England would purchase unity of witness at a terrible cost, but also that the defining of the main issues would be sadly marred, if fresh formulations were to exclude even from the ordained ministry all those who are unable to teach these particular facts with whole-hearted conviction. Possibly no form of words can be devised which would give relief to such doubtful minds without creating an irreparable breach in that unity of faith which the Catholic Church is commissioned to uphold. Certainly to avoid altogether a dogmatic statement because of this difficulty would be nothing better than an impotent evasion of the duties which belong to the Church's stewardship. But need we believe that the Holy Spirit, Who made such marvellous use, in a situation just as difficult, of the anxious and certainly controversial deliberations of the Fathers at Nicæa, will not bestow at least an equal gift of counsel upon the leaders of our Church to-day?

New theologies and modern modifications of Christianity are, as we have seen, so closely bound up with questions as to the place and value of historic fact that at the present moment a dogmatic statement concerning such questions alone would seem to carry with it all necessary theological implications as to the manner in which the Creeds must be interpreted. It must always be remembered that it is not the task of dogma to propound theological theories as such. But a full statement of the kind we are contemplating

would, of course, have to travel beyond the immediate subject-matter of the Creeds. The Sacraments as the appointed means of fellowship in Christ's life also involve questions of necessary belief which cannot be ignored.

In regard to the manner of our belief in the two Sacraments of the Gospel, hardly anything further is required than a reaffirmation of the limits which the Prayer Book Catechism suggests. Our Church has all along shown a really Christian wisdom in refusing to define further the mode of the bestowal of the grace which it affirms the signs of the Sacraments to convey. Fundamentally it was and is wrong to make transubstantiation a necessary belief, not because it is necessarily false, but because, whether true or false, it remains a scholastic theory, and therefore its truth or falsehood must depend on the philosophic merits of scholasticism. Transubstantiation is one way of interpreting a mystery, and if it is honestly maintained by pious opinion as the best way, there is nothing in the philosophic doctrine itself which need involve any sort of disloyalty to the Church of England. But the attitude of modern thought to scholasticism as a philosophy is quite sufficient to make it intolerable that transubstantiation should be taught as in any way essential to our faith. Perhaps the association of the doctrine with superstitious practice must still require an explicit disavowal of it; but at any rate it is most desirable that other and more modern theories should be freely expounded in the Church.

There is, however, room for doubt whether one practice recently revived among us does not by implication deny this necessary freedom of interpretation. This practice is the adoration of the Reserved Sacrament—a question which must be dealt with as belonging

to theology rather than merely to liturgical practice. Does adoration of the Reserved Sacrament necessarily involve a particular philosophic theory of the Sacramental Presence? For the Real Presence in connexion with the liturgy we rely on no philosophic theory, but on our Lord's promise; the method of the Presence and of the communication of the grace is susceptible of divers interpretations in terms of many philosophic views. But for the Real Presence in the Sacrament as the object of an extra-liturgical devotion we have no such warrant of promise. On what, then, do we rely in teaching such a Presence? Is it on the particular theory that the act of consecration effects a physical change in the bread and wine as such, so that the consecrated elements remain changed as physical objects into the Body and Blood of Christ, no matter to what use they are subsequently put? Without attempting to prejudge the main issue of the controversy, we have a right to say that if adoration of the Reserved Sacrament does necessarily involve such a theory, clearly the Church will be travelling altogether beyond the legitimate province of her requirements, if she authorize the adoration of the Reserved Sacrament; for she cannot do so without teaching that the Real Presence for that purpose is an assured fact of her faith. It is worth while noticing that if our Church were to forbid extra-liturgical cult of the Sacrament on the ground that it gives authority to a particular explanation of the Sacramental Presence, she would have the unanimous support of Eastern orthodoxy. In any case, it seems impossible to refrain much longer from a decision either for or against.

There is another theological question connected with the Sacraments which also seems to require some fuller treatment than it receives in our present formularies.

This question refers to the nature of the Eucharistic offering. The mediæval theories which implied that the Sacrifice of the Mass was a repetition of that made on the Cross, and that the latter was offered for original, the former for post-baptismal sin, are not officially maintained by Rome * herself, and are dead as far as the Church of England is concerned. They need no further repudiation. The idea, however, that the presentation of the one Sacrifice in the Eucharist is made vicariously (i.e. that the priest presents it simply for the people instead of the people presenting it through the priest) is by no means without influence both in the Roman Church and in certain sections of the English, even though it be not formulated as an explicit doctrine. As we have noticed, the suggestion of this false idea is contained in all that hinders or obscures the full participation of the congregation in the service, the use of an unknown tongue, the inaudible rendering of the most sacred parts of the rite, celebration without communicants, and the like. Such practices harmonize generally with the clericalism which assigns to the laity a lower status in the Christian body.

By no means the least unfortunate consequence of the false Eucharistic doctrine thus implied is the apparent justification of the suspicion with which Evangelical Churchmen regard all use of sacrificial language in connexion with the liturgy. To fail to insist on the Eucharist as the presentation by the faithful of the representative sacrifice of manhood offered on the Cross impairs the whole authority of the Sacrament as the characteristic act of Christian

* Or rather they are only maintained in a comparatively innocuous sense, cf. Dom J. Chapman, *Bishop Gore and the Catholic Claims*.

worship and as the appointed means whereby Christian people hold communion with the mystery of Christ's holiness. We should thus weaken the force of the very command, "Do this in remembrance of Me." As we have already said,* it is not so much the use of sacrificial language about the Eucharist that is the real point at issue, as the nature and character of the sacrifice to which the language refers. An authoritative statement on this subject would go far to clear up misunderstanding and to promote an effective unity.

* P. 60.

CHAPTER III

REFORMS CONNECTED WITH THE STEWARDSHIP OF HOLINESS

§ 1. The Church's Worship

The next class of reforms to which we turn consists of those which concern liturgical practice. Here our purpose is only to illustrate the intimate connexion which ought to exist between the Church's theological doctrine and her system of worship. We shall not, therefore, attempt to deal with that large and important section of liturgical reforms which is justly held to be of non-doctrinal significance.

Our first concern must be the liturgy itself. What has already been said is surely sufficient proof that the general order of the rite of 1549 must be restored.* Such changes in it as are made should be chiefly in the direction of removing archaisms which can be shown to interfere with the people's understanding of the service. Possibly, if a rewriting of it in sufficiently good modern English were practicable, such a revision might be an advantage. But the general lines of the old order must at all costs be restored. In particular

* See pp. 60, 61. It will be noticed that our main argument in favour of the order of 1549 depends on the fact that by bringing the prayer of oblation into immediate connexion with the consecration prayer it bears a clearer and more effective witness against the real error of Rome than does our present liturgy. Cf. Frere, *Some Principles of Liturgical Reform*, ch. ix. The traditional order of the liturgy is of course much older than Romanism.

the old position of the Prayer of Oblation in the Canon is our public witness against clericalism that the people share the presentation of the offering, endeavour to unite themselves with it, and in that endeavour seek the grace of communion which follows. It is a tragic illustration of the present confusion of issues that it should be the professedly anti-Roman party among us which objects most strenuously to the restoration of the ancient and logical order. An authoritative statement upon doctrine such as we have indicated might perhaps remove the not unreasonable apprehension on which the objection has been really based.

In reality the most powerful opposition to the authoritative restoration of the order of 1549 might be offered by those Liberals who desire to see a number of widely different rites permitted as alternatives, among which they would willingly allow a place to the 1549 service. There is indeed a good deal to be said in favour of a strictly limited period during which experimentation with different forms should be allowed; for the ancient order might then ultimately stand more securely upon its own merits. But any permanent toleration of widely differing uses would be a greater disaster even than the imposition of one which is unsatisfactory. It belongs to the whole sacramental character of the Communion service that it should be the one characteristic act of worship wherein every Christian may feel himself at home, however far he may have wandered from other familiar surroundings. That is a great ideal which ought not to be ignored; and it would perish more utterly than it has perished already in the confusions of English Churchmanship, if widely divergent forms of liturgy were actually authorized, so that variety became the norm. This

argument has the greater force the more widely our communion spreads beyond the seas. Our rule must always be to have a vernacular liturgy, which means that the Eucharist must be celebrated in many different tongues. It is therefore all the more essential that the order of its form should remain constant, so that one who does not understand the vernacular may yet "know where he is" as the service proceeds.

A similar argument applies to questions of ceremonial. It is often argued that matters of ceremonial are of secondary importance, and that therefore we can afford to tolerate an almost infinite variety of usage; what we must aim at, we are told, is unity, not uniformity. The easygoing logicians who argue thus fail to notice that their premise is at variance with their conclusion. Matters of ceremonial are indeed of secondary importance; therefore it is supremely important that ceremonial should not attract to itself the attention of the worshipper. The ceremonial which attracts least attention is that which is familiar; and that which is to be familiar must first be uniform. No doubt, as far as the immediate future is concerned, the argument from familiarity might lead us to encourage each individual church to proceed exactly as it has done in the past. But if we take somewhat longer and less parochial views, our conclusion will be different. We shall try to establish a reasonable measure of uniformity in ceremonial which shall in time familiarize itself universally. Surely, if we start with the home Church, it should not be impossible to arrive at some standard of simple and dignified ceremonial suited, on the whole, to our national temperament. At least we have the right to demand that a layman who enters a strange church should neither be shocked by its slovenliness nor

mystified by elaborate interpolations the meaning of which he cannot guess.

Passing from the ritual and ceremonial of the liturgy, we turn to questions connected with its place in our system of worship. Here we are confronted with the much-discussed problem of the Sunday Morning Service. According to the line of argument we have hitherto followed, the Eucharist must be restored as the normal and characteristic act of worship for every Christian ecclesia or congregation. It appears equally, however, that the celebration of High Mass at a popular hour, without allowing the general congregation to communicate, is a custom to be deplored, however earnestly and effectively the people may be taught to communicate frequently at an earlier celebration. To make the main act of corporate worship one at which the people do not communicate, fatally mars the logical order and sacramental meaning of the rite. The corporate presentation of Christ's sacrifice, together with the prayers and praises of the people, takes place with the exact purpose that through their self-identification with the offering made for them the people may receive the life offered, and each with it the supply of his needs and the fulfilment of his worship. That, no doubt, is an ideal, but it is an ideal confused and lost, if, when the great presentation is made, such of the people as are communicants have already performed the most solemn act to which the presentation should be a prelude. The false ideas are inevitably encouraged that communion is only a secondary aspect of the Sacrament, or that its meaning is merely a private and individual partaking of Christ, rather than a corporate act of fellowship wherein the whole Body is knit with the Head, so that each member may be renewed with the vigour of the spiritual life which pulses in all alike.

The main objections to the restoration of a "parish Communion" as the central act of the week's worship are two—distinct, though closely allied. (1) It would involve a relaxation of the rule of fasting Communion. (2) It would encourage many persons to make their Communion with very scanty preparation and with an altogether insufficient sense of the solemnity of the act they are undertaking.

(1) As far as the ceremonial rule is concerned, its maintenance does not seem to the present writer to be of sufficient importance to outweigh the advantages of regular congregational Communions.* The arguments, however, on both sides involve such far-reaching questions of principle that the discussion of them is impossible here. The subject is pre-eminently one on which the self-governing Church must declare her mind.

(2) The danger of a generally lax use of the Sacrament is certainly grave. It threatens the whole principle of the reform which we desire. The whole purpose of making the Communion a common service for the people is to keep before the people the awful mystery of Christ's holiness. If the result is to encourage an easygoing treatment of Communion itself, the very salt of life will have lost its savour, and our purpose is utterly defeated. Past laxity and failure to teach the meaning of sacramental worship does make it really possible that this may happen. But something must in any case be left to faith, and it ought not to be beyond the reach of our wisdom to devise reasonable safeguards. For instance, it might be well to make it a general rule that the parish Communion should be celebrated, not at the hour when the congregation can attend with least trouble to themselves, but at the earliest hour at which a general attendance can be

* Cf. my pamphlet, *Fasting Communion*, S.P.C.K.

reasonably expected, if the congregation is definitely willing to take some little trouble in the matter. The exact hour must, of course, vary with the circumstances of the parish and the normal employment of the inhabitants. It is utterly unchristian to imagine that times of worship can be fixed by rules which have no reference to the economic and industrial conditions of the present. In some places it is quite possible that the advisability of a regular evening Communion might have to be considered; but, if real care were taken in instructing the people, it should not be ultimately impossible to restore the parish Communion everywhere in a manner really stimulating to spiritual life. Such a restoration would indeed be worth a very large sacrifice of numbers in our congregations. A small and earnest congregation would very soon attract to itself fresh members and imbue them with its spirit. Large and slack congregations only minister to their own indolence, and provoke a healthy sarcasm from the outsider. The Church would already have taken a long stride along the path of reform, if once the clergy could make up their minds that the devotional spirit of the service, not the numbers which attend it, is the real criterion of its value. It might easily be a gain, if some of our congregations were reduced to a fraction of their present numerical strength.

Before leaving the subject of the parish Eucharist a word must be said as to the music. Music is an integral part of popular worship, and consequently there are questions connected with its ordering which cannot be left entirely in the hands of the musical expert. It belongs to our central purpose that the laity should take its full share in the act of Eucharist. It is therefore quite essential that in the ordinary parish church the music should be genuinely congregational. Surely

it is one of the most distressing symptoms of that illogical semi-clericalism which still holds us in its grip, that a band of hired singers in semi-sacerdotal costume should be interposed between altar and people so as to suggest that the congregation is really an audience. Unquestionably that is the effect of four-part singing by a surpliced choir. Such music cannot be good, because it does not fulfil what ought to be its purpose—viz. to be a means whereby the congregation expresses its worship. Those who have had experience can bear witness, what a startling change comes over the whole character of the service, if once the choir is merged in the congregation, and every man, woman, and child, who can attend a practice in the week, is taught to render with the understanding in simple music the psalms and hymns most appropriate for the occasion. Of course, there is no reason why music should be artistically bad because it is simple and popular. We must remember also our aim that sacramental worship should be, not a relaxation, but rather an inspired and inspiring effort wherein the soul is girded up to press forward into the holy life of sacrifice behind the sacramental veil. We shall therefore have no choice but to discourage the use of certain sentimental and quasi-operatic chants and tunes which at the moment stand high in popular favour.

No apology is needed for digressing from broadly general considerations into such petty details of church management. It is time indeed that the Church of England should learn the importance of acting on principle even in the smallest things, and there is imperative need to show that broad principles, if they are to be carried out, must affect even the details of parochial life. No one would pretend that we can give our principles universal and adequate expression

in a month or in a generation. But we can, if we will, visualize what such an expression would mean, and adapt our immediate action so as to bring us nearer to our vision. All the reforms before mentioned have been suggested and urged time and again in various quarters. What is too often forgotten is their bearing on our whole conception of the nature and functions of the Christian Church. The method of piecemeal reform dissipates itself in a mass of details, because it fails to start from any general conception which could co-ordinate its efforts.

§ 2. The Church's Membership

The foregoing suggestions about worship spring directly from our primary demand that the laity should take its full and equal share with the priesthood in the services of the Church. It is therefore becoming increasingly evident that our whole scheme of reform depends on the readiness of the main body of the laity to accept and undertake a lively membership in the Christian society. If this condition be not fulfilled, the Church cannot but slip back into some form of that very clericalism from which it is our purpose to rescue her. We have already postulated self-government for the Church. What, then, is the laity from which we are to expect that response and active support which we cannot but require? How, in other words, is membership in the new self-governing Church of England to be defined? Our present confusion so terribly complicates the whole problem that it seems wellnigh impossible to return any clear or satisfactory answer. The most we can do is to survey from our present point of view the widely divergent opinions which are commonly held. Evidently the test of

recognized membership must be the possession of the franchise for the election of the representative bodies, parochial and general, by which the autonomous Church is to be governed.

If we decide to include in an equal membership all those who have received Christian baptism, a majority of our nominal members will be composed of those who at present own, and desire to own, no real or effective loyalty to our Church. These are the people whose habit it is to come to church for marriage, for the baptism of their children, and for burial, but who hardly ever darken its doors except on these occasions. The main objection to giving our franchise so wide a range is insufficiently understood. If once we recognize the class of people mentioned as members of our body, it will be, to say the least, very difficult to refuse them the ministrations for which they ask. On the other hand, to go on performing these ministrations for all comers, as is the general custom at present, would endanger the whole principle of the reform which we contemplate. Vast numbers of those who at present come to us for marriage, baptism, and burial are by choice and intention not communicants or even believers in Christianity in any sense in which the Church can legitimately interpret the term. The Creed, the Incarnation, the Atonement, the sacramental union with Christ, mean almost nothing to them. This sad but undeniable fact imports into our present administration of marriage, baptism, and burial an element of unreality and make-believe, of which the complete dissociation of those services from the Holy Communion is the visible sign and proof. The Baptism Service requires clear pledges from the sponsors that the child is to be brought up to be a communicant. The Marriage Service, with its insistence on the con-

nexion of marriage with the mystical union between Christ and His Church, loses all its deepest meaning unless it is joined, as the Prayer Book contemplates that it should be joined, with the celebration of the Sacrament. And at the Burial of the Dead the solemn words of the Prayer Book Office (and still more the far more beautiful and appropriate words of the First Prayer Book) are scarcely intelligible, when the sacramental sign of our union in Christ with the departed is as a matter of course omitted. Yet at present Baptism is habitually performed when the sponsors' pledges are given by those who evidently have no understanding of what they say, while the Marriage and Burial Services cannot be joined with the Communion, because those who come to them are not only not communicants, but have no conception of what communion means. Hence in practical result the ministration of these rites is in many cases simply an elaborate irony at the expense of the Reformation, giving an impression of just that sort of magical incantation against which the authors of the Prayer Book most desired to protest. Thus, in the expressive words of Korah, we "put out the eyes of the people," we encourage them to remain blindly content with their severance from any real fellowship in the Body of Christ. So we return to a double standard of Christian membership, all the more disastrous in practice because we do not admit it in principle, and therefore take no steps to palliate the evil, if it be indeed inevitable.

Any attempt, however, to introduce a greater strictness is sure to create an outcry of protest. Many will tell us that we are reserving the Church's rites for the outwardly pious and respectable, that we withhold from the Publican what we gladly bestow

on the Pharisee. Needless to say, this charge would be quite unfair. What we require, and do not find, in those who seek the Church's ministrations, is no Pharisaic correctness, but rather some token of that sense of need and striving after righteousness whereby the Publican was justified. Many broad-minded persons fail to observe that it was not omission of church-going which commended the Publican in the eyes of God, but his recognition of his sinfulness. Modern Pharisaism is commonly represented by him who stays away from church praying in his heart, "Lord, I thank Thee that I am very much as other men are."

Other critics would probably contend that any strictness in bestowing the Church's ministrations neglects "the inarticulate religion" so characteristic of English human nature, to which chaplains at the Front have borne striking witness. Assuredly we cannot neglect the many tokens of essential Christianity manifested in the most trying circumstances by many who have no connexion at all with organized religion. But what is it that has elicited this unsuspected capacity for Christian living? Simply the imperative call to effort and sacrifice which active service inevitably makes. We evade making such a call when we administer the Church's rites to all comers in easy-going fashion, as though nothing were required of those who join in them. We leave the inarticulate religion to slumber in silence; and, real though it be, it will end in the sleep of death, if the Church refuses to sound any summons which might awaken it to action.

But perhaps the strongest objection to any limiting of merely baptismal membership is due to the fear that disestablishment for the Church will be its necessary consequence. At least a large percentage of the

population has been baptized, and if the Church counts them all as her members, she may still make a reasonable claim to a national position, even when she has become autonomous as a society. But if she restricts her franchise to a small fraction of the citizens, she cannot possibly demand both self-government and national recognition. There are many who feel that a public recognition of religion on the part of the State is of such transcendent importance that almost any sacrifice is worth making to retain it. But the question must be pressed: what religion is the State to recognize? If the State desires to recognize the full religion of the Church of England, then obviously she can only do so on the ground that a majority of the citizens are ready to accept membership in that Church on whatever terms are essential to it. If, on the other hand, the religion which the State desires to recognize is something different—e.g. some rather diluted or "undenominational" Christianity—then clearly it is both disingenuous and unjust that the State should profess to recognize before others the type of Christianity which the Church of England represents. In neither case is it at all reasonable, or even honest, that the Church of England should alter the terms of her own membership in order to obtain a State recognition which she cannot justly claim.

The habit of judging the strength of a society by counting the number of its nominal members is as insidious as it is misleading. Its temptation is especially great in the case of a Church which avowedly exists to include all men; and to narrow voluntarily the Church's membership seems like a betrayal of her commission. Yet undeniably there is greater promise of growth in a small compact body, clearly distinguished by a common loyalty and visibly

acting for a common aim, than in a large and loose association, wherein the more part know not wherefore they are come together, if indeed they can be said to come together at all.

There is therefore very much to be said in favour of those who would restrict the franchise of a self-governing Church of England at least to holders of the status of communicant. They warn us, not without reason, that a self-governing body, though it may well enlarge its franchise, is very unlikely to restrict it. Too narrow a franchise may in itself be a worse evil than too wide a franchise, but unquestionably it is an evil which can be far more easily remedied. The rigourists in this matter are not afraid of numerical reduction, because principles seem to them to be of greater importance than numbers. They are not afraid of denationalizing the Church, because in their view the only hope of making the Church truly national lies in making the nation truly Christian; and the first need is to demonstrate to the majority of citizens that they are at present outside real membership of the Church. They are often represented as ecclesiastical Pharisees, but in reality their dearest wish is to end once for all the hypocrisy involved in treating as Church members on special occasions those who have no desire to live in touch with the Church's fellowship. They are accused of formalism, but rather their chief aim is to avoid that most deadly formalism which shows itself in the lax administration of forms.

The case for restriction would be overwhelming if only it might be assumed that our present communicants, however few in number, are really people with whom the Church might hope to make a fresh start. If we were to go to the other extreme and confine the

franchise to communicants, we might then hope to exact some genuine pledge in baptism that the child would be brought up as a member of Christ, to marry in church only those qualified and desirous to receive the Communion, to join a Communion Service also with the Burial of the Dead. But might we, then, also hope that the intensification of the Church's spirit within its restricted body would fill that body with a missionary zeal which is the true guarantee of growth? There, unfortunately, comes the doubt. Regret it as we may, our communicants belong chiefly to the well-to-do classes of society, and the majority of them survey all problems from an angle at which their social position and upbringing have inevitably placed them. Whatever be their political convictions—and the alliance between Churchmanship and Toryism is grossly exaggerated—they are apt to be conservative by temperament, lacking in a spirit of venture and in the willingness to cast bread upon the waters, apt to cling to old methods and familiar externals as essential to that which is permanent in religion. Can such bottles ever contain the ferment of new spiritual beginnings? The perplexity for the practical reformer seems well-nigh hopeless. On the one hand, the restoration of genuine sponsorship in baptism, the regular reassociation of Holy Communion with Christian marriage and burial, seem to be essential if a new spirit of sincerity is to breathe in the Church's rites, and if a single standard of Church membership is to be effectively maintained. On the other hand, it seems impossible to look for these reforms, unless from the beginning a communicant basis for membership is firmly established. And yet, if at present we recognize only communicant members, shall we not encourage more than ever the popular and utterly misguided notion

that the Church belongs either to the socially respectable or to the temperamentally devout? Perhaps the right course is to follow our principles boldly, trusting the Holy Spirit to work new life in a material which human prudence cannot regard as promising. Perhaps some measure of compromise is inevitable—as, for instance, to allow only communicants to sit on representative councils, while extending the franchise to others. In this case it will surely be our duty to make it clear to our non-communicant members that their membership is not a full one, and that they have in reality only the status of "adherents." How this can best be done is a matter for discussion which cannot here be attempted.

§ 3. The Functions of Laity and Clergy

When once terms of membership have been settled other problems of organization resolve themselves practically into the maintenance of a right relation between laity and clergy. The general aim is clear. We desire to preserve absolute equality of status both in privilege and duty, but to reserve to the clergy, both as representative agents of the whole society and as special experts within it, the functions which properly belong to them in these capacities.

These principles are faithfully embodied in the constitution proposed in the Report of the Archbishops' Committee on Church and State. In a self-governing Church of England the laity should exercise in reality the general control which is nominally theirs under the present establishment. But they must do so with due regard to the special functions for which the ordained ministry exists. This is the aim which the Report endeavours to secure in its system of repre-

sentative councils—parochial, diocesan, and central. In the central council all proposals are considered by the laity and nothing can become law without its support, but the initiative in all measures immediately concerned with faith and worship must lie with the Bishops, not because they belong to any ruling caste, but because the ordering of faith and worship is the sphere of their special function in the body.

But, apart from the actual machinery of the Church's constitution, there is great need that by all means the laity should be brought to look upon the clergy as the delegates and representatives through whose agency they themselves act, and for whose work they are in a real sense responsible. The priesthood of the laity is a reality which must be emphasized, especially by avoiding the misleading connotation with which the mere phrase is often associated. The real priesthood of the layman is, properly speaking, a right of direct access to God belonging to every member in the Christian body. We do not make this clear simply by encouraging specially chosen laymen to perform all the acts which come nearest in externals to those which belong to the ordained priesthood. The laity is not really helped to understand its true priesthood when, for instance, a sidesman is procured to read the lessons, still less if minor orders are multiplied in which laymen are employed. Such measures may be most desirable in themselves, but they do not teach the laity in what their priesthood consists; rather they encourage a disastrous confusion between the spiritual or general priesthood, which belongs to all, and the sacramental priesthood of outward act, which must of necessity be confined to the few. The latter is mistaken for the only true priesthood, and consequently those laymen who do not perform quasi-sacerdotal acts in the church

feel themselves to be excluded. The layman who serves at the altar, or even only reads the lessons, is popularly regarded as being by so much more of a priest, and therefore less of a layman ; thus the priesthood of the laity as such is still further obscured. The true relation of the layman to the ordained priest can only be shown if the whole laity is taught to co-operate in, and feel responsible for, the training and setting apart of the clergy for their office, and brought to understand its proper share in the sacramental acts which the ordained priest alone performs. The layman's priesthood is far more effectively demonstrated to him when the whole congregation is taught to follow the Consecration Prayer and to pronounce the final Amen, than when merely one of its number is seen to be serving at the altar.

Again, when we turn to the question of preaching, it is most desirable that the congregation should not lose the benefit of any gift of exhortation which may be possessed by its lay members. The whole spiritual life and thought of the Church would be greatly stimulated, if addresses and lectures from laymen were far more often heard in church than they are at present. The gifts of prophecy and of instruction are gifts which we ought to stir up among us far more than we do, and ample opportunity should be provided for their exercise. But in such exercise of a special gift the layman is in no sense acting as a priest. The ordained priest is trained and set apart to be a fully authorized interpreter of what the Christian Church teaches in respect of faith and morals. This is obviously quite a distinct function from that of the prophet who is stirred by the Spirit to deliver an occasional message, or from that of a man who has some special knowledge on a particular subject which he can with profit impart

to the congregation. The "liturgical sermon" has the nature of an authorized exposition of the Church's teaching, and as such it must be reserved for the ordained minister. In regard to preaching, therefore, the laity can only maintain its *priesthood* by its general control and co-operation in the training and setting apart of ordained ministers; meanwhile the layman could and should be provided with full opportunities of using any gift either of preaching or teaching which he may possess.

Incidentally, in thus defining the scope of the layman's priesthood we see more clearly the considerations which ought to determine the position assigned to women in the Church. It is entirely clear that women must be fully and frankly accorded absolute equality of status with men. Unfortunately, the whole controversy surrounding the "women's movement" in the Church is becoming embittered through failure to detect survivals of clericalism on the one hand and persistent confusion on the other between equality of status and identity of function. The implied arguments of the extremer partisans of the women's movement might as a rule be not unfairly represented as follows: Women are the equals of men; the priest is by nature superior in holiness to the layman; therefore women ought to be priests. Or again: Women are the equals of men; equals ought to do the same things; therefore women ought to be priests. The first argument obviously exhibits the whole vice of clericalism, while the second as obviously confuses equality of status with identity of function. Once these fallacies are detected, the whole question concerning women is not, of course, settled, but entirely reopened, since the most commonly heard arguments on the subject are seen to have very little relevance to the real issue. In regard to the

ordination of women the relevant consideration is not one of sex-equality, but of sex-qualification. Difference of sex, though it involves no inequality, is nevertheless a differentiation ; and the problem is simply whether that differentiation has or has not any bearing upon qualification for the priesthood. That qualification, it should be observed, involves something more than the mere possession of a particular " spiritual gift " ; it involves suitability for acting as the authorized representative of the society. In any case, one of the reforms most urgently needed is that women should be given far more scope and responsibility in those departments of the Church's life where their special gifts are most useful ; and it seems utterly unreasonable and confusing to withhold from them any right, privilege, or duty which the layman as such may exercise or perform.

But of course the laity can only take their proper share in the Church's life when the clergy are also fulfilling their appointed function. The ideal of the organic unity of the body can only begin to be realized when all the different members begin to perform their proper tasks. In relation to Church reform the task of the clergy is specially vital, for to them as authorized teachers belongs the duty of expounding the principles of reform. The greatest danger of self-government is lest the autonomous Church should swerve altogether from the line of true progress, before a sufficient number of trained guides are ready to point out the right direction. The special functions of the clergy are, in fact, three : (1) to teach the faith ; (2) to administer the Sacraments ; (3) to have the care of souls. The first is derived directly from the stewardship of the mystery of truth, the second and third from the stewardship of the mystery of holiness.

In face of obtrusive facts no one at present can pretend that the clergy are at all adequately equipped for doing their work. At least every one recognizes that normally the priest is out of touch with his people. Doubtless in the British Expeditionary Force the exception may be the rule; yet this exceptional rule is precisely the exception which proves the rule, because the conditions of life in the B.E.F. are quite abnormal. The clergy are out of touch with the people; the fact is clear, the explanation is doubtful. The layman most usually accounts for it by asserting that the clergy are a class apart and know nothing of life; and for this ignorance and lack of sympathy the layman commonly blames the theological training which the priest is thought to have received. Let the ordinand knock about the world for a few years before he is dressed up in black; let him have some first-hand experience of the layman's life. Such a preparation, it is said, will be worth all the theological studies in the world, because it will open a way for the priest into the layman's mind and heart. There are many even among the clergy themselves who desire, as the all-important reform in the training of the clergy, that Bishops should decline to ordain men who have not spent a year or two at least in some secular business or occupation.

In this, as in most popular opinion, there is a great deal of truth. But behind it too often lurks the old Protestant prejudice that it is desirable simply to assimilate priest to layman, rather than to emphasize distinct functions while securing equal status. Sometimes it is forgotten that the purpose of clergy-training is not to put the priest on good terms with the layman, but to enable the priest to minister effectively to the layman in spiritual things. The "good terms" are means to an end, the opportunity for the priest's

work, not the work itself. It is, moreover, not the case that misunderstanding between clergy and laity is mainly due to the fact that the priest has not shared the layman's experience. If that were so, why should the misunderstanding be greatest in the Church of England, where the differentiation is least between clerical and lay education? Probably the misunderstanding is far more due to the fact that the priest has no recognized and definite position of his own, than to his failure to assimilate himself to other people. Precisely because his real function is not recognized or understood, he exhibits that superficial clericalism which the layman finds repellent. Valuable, therefore, as experience in lay life undoubtedly is for the priest, it would be folly to insist on the necessity of such experience to the hindrance of special training for the priest's special work.

The priest's first task is to present the mystery of God's revelation so that a creed appears to be, not a mere set of propositions to which assent is required, but a setting forth in language of a personal living Nature which can be approached and known progressively by the effort of the soul. His aim is, in a Pauline phrase, to "placard" * before the people the Incarnation and Atonement, neither as mere external incidents of a history long past, nor as mere spiritual truths belonging to another world, but as sacramental facts—facts, that is, which have all the particular reality of history, and by that particularity show forth and embody an eternal character always working in the most modern world. He who would teach the Christian faith must first appreciate that the Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus are facts, in the heart of which beyond all others God has set eternity. They

* προγραφεῖν, Gal. iii, 1.

are acts in space and time supremely characteristic of a Being which, because it transcends space and time, is always acting in all times and places. This principle is the universal key and guide to the presentation of the Christian faith. It directly teaches no philosophy ; yet it involves philosophic ideas which compel the earnest consideration of the deepest student of metaphysics, while at the same time it makes possible and justifies statements about God as infinitely simple and effective as the healing touch of the Saviour's hand. It is the principle which enables us to see in due perspective the age-long process of God's self-revelation down from the earliest gropings of the savage mind, and then to embody His identical self-revelation to-day even in the latest jargon of contemporary sciolism. In other words, it is the principle which enables us to preserve a permanent unchanging mystery in and through an infinite diversity of verbal presentation. The supreme power of setting forth one central idea freely in diversities of expression should be the goal of our effort in training teachers of the faith. The imparting of this power is the aim of all true education of the mind, and in religious education its importance is the more intensely vital in proportion as the idea of God, both in the depth of its unity and the width of its range, pre-eminently needs such power for its interpretation.

Why has the learning of dead languages been made the basis of a humane education ? The main case for Latin and Greek can be quite simply put. The Greeks and Romans had ideas of permanent importance which they expressed in forms of speech very markedly different from the languages of to-day. Therefore to learn the thoughts of Greeks and Romans through their original language brings us to the better understanding of permanent ideas, just because processes

of translation force us to detach the ideas from their verbal medium. Thus, through the attempt to render ideas in the most widely differing languages we gain both a firmer hold on the ideas themselves and a better control of words to express them. Thus powers of thought are trained. The truly educated man is he who never allows the mere use of a word to control his thinking, because he has such a grasp of ideas in distinction from words, that words are always the servants of his thought. Such a man is not stampeded into action by party cries. He knows, for instance, what freedom really means, and can judge for himself whether a course of action commended in its name will really tend to promote its reality.

So in the sphere of religion, the man truly educated in the Christian faith is he who has such a grasp of its central ideas that he can at once distinguish them from, and interpret them through, the diverse forms of speech which belong to different ages in time, different races in the world, and different classes in society. Religious education is a progressive grasp of evangelical facts at once in the identical universality of their essential meaning and in their infinite adaptability to different forms of expression. At present our clergy are, on the whole, badly educated in the faith, because their studies, as it were, begin and end in a dead language, and they are not sufficiently practised in translating its traditional forms into newer ones. They are taught to understand the Creeds in relation to Arianism and Gnosticism, the Articles in relation to the Anabaptists. Such understanding is most valuable and important, in so far as it leads us on to understand also how the central ideas underlying Creeds and Articles should be expressed in relation to Christian Science, evolutionism, and the thousand and one

-isms and -ologies which make up the religious thinking of the world to-day. Yet somehow in our theological colleges the purpose of learning what is old seems to have been unaccountably forgotten. When the student has finished his study of the first four centuries and the Reformation epoch, his course is finished. He has learnt the old language without having been made to translate it. And so orthodoxy is associated with dead formulas instead of with living ideas.

One result of this defective education is that our party loyalties are so largely determined by externals. Our " Catholics " seek to reproduce the outward forms of the mediæval systems which they admire, without asking what is really admirable in the ideas behind the systems, and how it can best be restored to us to-day. Meanwhile our modernizers habitually confuse change with progress ; they bestow an equal commendation on all who are in outward conflict with traditional authority, and suppose that eulogies of " spiritual experience " and condemnations of " ecclesiastical shibboleths " are sufficient to decide the merits of any actual discussion. Yet the very use of the word " shibboleth " is an excellent example of the extent to which even the professedly freest thought has suffered itself to be dominated by words. The modern assailants of shibboleths never ask how the original shibboleth was used, and whether it achieved its purpose. That question would have suggested a further one : Are there not to-day theological Ephraimites, whom an effective formula might prevent from teaching in the Church's name what is fatal to her faith ? But most of the controversy between religious parties is made utterly unhelpful by the same pathetic nominalism. Terms such as dogma, freedom, Mass, Confession, rule of the Church, religious experience, apostolic

succession are bandied about as party cries, proudly worn or savagely attacked as party badges, while but few pause to inquire what are really the ideas which the words ought to represent, and how in modern circumstances the value of those ideas can best be conserved or gained. It is needless to multiply illustrations. The one remedy for the evil is sure, if slow. Our theological students must be taught translation. Their study must not stop short with the consideration of Creeds and Articles in their original or historical context. The ideas behind Creeds and Articles must be applied to the modern context in all its complexity. The theological and pseudo-theological literature, the journalism, the popular novels of modern England, must be considered in their bearing upon the eternal mystery which breathes through the struggling, exhausted language of the older dogmatics. So only can the mystery be preserved whole and undefiled by being interpreted afresh. It is entirely futile for the " Catholic " to suppose that the externals of a past millennium can or ought to be imposed without adaptation upon the thought and action of to-day. It is equally idle for the Modernist to assume that because Galileo would once have been right in resisting a Pope, any one to-day is justified in abusing a Bishop. Whatever be the rules which should govern us, they cannot be quite such simple rules of thumb as our rigid reactionaries and enthusiastic futurists would like us to believe. The Church's teachers must have a keener vision and a saner judgment, if self-government is not to end in self-destruction, and if authoritative faith and free thinking are once more to join hands in the fellowship of Christ.

The priest's special function, however, is not confined to the teaching of the faith. There remains also to be

considered his stewardship of holiness in the administration of the Sacraments and in the cure of souls. It is in respect of the cure of souls that his training is at present most obviously lacking, and the neglect arises from the same causes, the operation of which has just been noticed. The aim of the mediæval text-books on moral theology was to placé at the priest's disposal the best scientific knowledge available for use in his sacred office. The Roman Church has since retained the essential method of the mediæval system, while bringing it more or less up to date by a guarded use of the modern science of psychology. Though, however, she uses psychology up to a point, Rome can never supersede the casuistical method of the Schoolmen ; for it is her aim that her directors should give precise rules of conduct which the layman may feel satisfied in performing. Thus the distinction between actual sins as mortal and venial, and all the somewhat legal formalism to which such distinctions lead, are really necessary to her system. Rome is obliged to attempt the hopeless task of evaluating and classifying actions as such, because her whole conception of the Church's authority in morals is, as we have already noticed, essentially Mosaic ; it is designed to give the support of an outward rule rather than the stimulus of a fresh inspiration. Rome cannot, at least for popular purposes, recognize the fullness of the Christian truth that outward actions in themselves have no moral value whatsoever, and are righteous or sinful only as expressing a condition of the heart and will. This truth obviously makes the distinction between mortal and venial sins impossible as a distinction between mere actions. Venial sin may indeed be distinguished from mortal as a careless will is distinct from one which is deliberately rebellious ; but this distinction, so far

from helping us to evaluate or classify actions as such, simply makes the attempt to do so absurd.

But does the frank admission of this absurdity make impossible any really scientific training in the direction of souls? Unquestionably it makes it much more difficult, for it gives the whole idea of direction a new and less simple connotation. The aim of the director will be much less to give explicit directions than to enable the mind and will of a man himself to direct his own action. This is, of course, an infinitely harder task, and there are many who will pronounce it to be in the majority of cases impossible. It is better, they will say, to achieve a second best than to fail altogether in attempting an ideal. But may not modern science give us help, if we have the courage to use it? Psychology is still in its infancy, but its analysis of the mechanism of the spiritual life, instincts, emotions, and temperaments, might show the way to a profounder method of spiritual guidance. If our method were thoroughly psychological, our primary classification would be one, not of actions, but of temperaments and characters, and the director would be constantly showing the individual how he may himself best overcome the defects and tendencies to evil which belong to his peculiar type of mental equipment and psycho-physical constitution. Doubtless the best directors, Roman and Anglican, do already employ this method, but it is our present suggestion that this method, if it were developed, might supersede altogether the formalism inseparable from the moral theology and casuistry of the Schoolmen.

The greatest obstacle to an instructive discussion of the whole subject is again to be found in the fact that our ecclesiastical loyalties are given to external words and forms rather than to ideas. The "Catholics"

among us desire to reproduce the whole system of direction which the Roman Church has associated with the Sacrament of Penance. Those, on the other hand, who dislike formal confession, are apt to stop short with warnings against Popery, and do not appear to feel the priest's need of any scientific training for the work of direction. In result the real merit of mediævalism, the idea of placing the best scientific method at the priest's disposal, finds hardly any modern interpretation. Exhortations from one quarter that the young priest should study his moral theology, are balanced by warnings from the other against the evils of habitual confession; and the possibilities which lurk in a genuinely psychological method of direction are never adequately discussed. It is obviously a question which merits the most anxious consideration, whether the Church of England, if she is really to make a new start as a self-governing body, should not use the opportunity to break new ground by a genuinely conservative reform in the practice of the cure of souls. What we should desire is that all our members should at least be within reach of priests who are recognized experts in direction, and that these experts should have as their constant aim, not the production of conformity to rules even of Christian morality, but the strengthening of souls to take charge of their own lives through communion in the life of Him Who is their wisdom and their righteousness.

Finally, direction must have its corporate and social as well as its purely individual aspect. Undoubtedly one of the most damaging accusations brought against the Church is that her members have taken no leading part in fighting for the cause of public morality against the social evils—drink, prostitution, bad housing, and insufficient wages, the connexion of which, both with

each other and with private morality, has been so abundantly proved. If the weight of Christian opinion is to be felt as a real power in the direction of social reform, it seems quite necessary that some definite action in regard to the evils specified should be recognized as part of a Churchman's normal loyalty to the holy society of which he is a member. It must rest with the clergy to declare what action that loyalty demands. At the same time, legitimate difference of opinion in regard to methods of reform is inevitably so wide that the giving of "a clear lead" in these matters is beset with difficulties which the enthusiasm of individual reformers is apt to ignore. The contrary dangers of standing aloof from the cause of Christ in society and of "interference in politics," form a Scylla and Charybdis between which the most skilful pilot of the Church can hardly steer a safe course. Much, however, might be done if the clergy were encouraged and equipped to deal from the pulpit with social questions in their moral aspect, and it is generally recognized that some study of these questions must form part of any course of training for the priesthood. The priest is naturally qualified from the circumstances of his calling to act as a mediator between different classes in society; and this qualification will become much more apparent, if the longer period of training, which nearly all reformers contemplate, enables a larger number of ordinands to offer themselves from the working class. At present the need for drawing the clergy only from the upper and middle classes springs directly from the shortness of the term allotted to special training for the ministry. Under existing conditions it is desirable that a priest should always come from an educated home, because thus only can the deficiency of his special training be disguised and

rendered comparatively innocuous. A longer period of special training for all ordinands would go far to obliterate the inequalities in education which now prevent the working man from occupying as a priest the same position in popular regard as that commonly assigned to his more favoured colleague from a public school.

Probably the best method of ensuring that the Church shall wisely direct the conduct of her members in regard to the vital problems of social reform and public morality, is to provide that the clergy shall be able to speak on these subjects with a certain amount of acknowledged authority and understanding. Many, however, appear to hold the opinion that this result would be better achieved, if the clergy themselves were to reduce their standard of living and emolument to that of the ordinary working man. It is thought that by so doing the clergy would convince working men of the genuineness of their Christian profession, and that this in itself would be sufficient to place the Church in her right relation to the social movements of the time. It need not be denied that in many working-class parishes there would be solid advantages gained, if the clergy were outwardly living under exactly the same financial conditions as those among whom they work. But behind the general appeal made to the clergy " to sacrifice themselves " (and their families) by living as working men there too often lurks the fundamental assumption of that clericalism against which we have protested. The appeal is too often based, not on the ground that to live on a workman's wage is more advantageous to the priest for the performance of his duty, but on the ground that such living is somehow more intrinsically Christian. Thus made, the appeal obviously provokes the question, " Why,

then, must not the Christian employer, financier, or gentleman be required to do the same?" Apparently a discrimination can only be defended by the plea that the priest is called upon to lead a more Christian life than the lay members of his flock. Thus once more the essential principle of clericalism stands revealed. Once it is clearly understood that the priest has, not a distinct standard of Christian duty, but a special function in the body, it is evident that the temporal circumstances of the priest's life should be determined simply by considering what will best help him to perform his special task, not by any appeal to the general nature of the Christian life as such; for such an appeal must be addressed equally to the layman. No doubt there may be many parishes, especially those inhabited entirely by artisans earning a weekly wage, where it may at least be plausibly argued that the clergy would do better to live themselves on the bare equivalent of that wage. In that case the demand should be made and discussed on the ground of the Church's advantage, and quite irrelevant exhortations to self-sacrifice as the duty of the priest should be left out of the argument. At the same time it must be borne in mind that although in some parishes the clergy might, on the whole, be gainers by living under the same conditions as those of their parishioners who possess the smallest nominal income, they would nevertheless lose definite advantages which ought not lightly to be given up. Some special opportunities for giving hospitality, and, above all, for reading and study, are of real help to the priest for the performance of his special duties, and it is idle for him to purchase popularity, even in the best sense of the word, at the expense of making himself unable to employ that popularity to the advantage of his proper work.

In the foregoing pages we have travelled at a somewhat breathless pace over a great range and variety of vexed questions and tangled controversies. Nothing like an adequate handling of individual problems has been attempted; our aim throughout has been simply to indicate the connexion which ought to exist between particular reforms in various departments and the central principles determining the Church's system as a whole. One general criticism has already been suggested. Any following out of definite and coherent principles seems necessarily to involve a considerable restriction of the Church of England's present membership; and to many this will appear a sacrifice too great to contemplate. Must the Church of England cease to be really the Church of England altogether, and abandon a title to which she will no longer have a right? It can only be replied that to put the question thus is to take too short a view of the problem. Even if the Church of England were to give up her title in the present, she would only do so in order that she might bear it more worthily in the future. To seem to cast bread upon the waters is by no means always an irrational proceeding. The typical Englishman is, in the roots of his national character, opposed both to Romanism and to Protestantism in their most characteristic forms. He intensely dislikes any sort of clericalism which he recognizes as such, though he is slow to detect its subtler manifestations. On the other hand, he is not naturally prone to that intense inward consciousness of salvation from which Protestantism derives its strength. He appreciates above all things the essential principles of democratic government and businesslike organization, however seldom the two are in fact combined. Therefore a Church which courageously stands for giving equality of status to clergy

and laity alike, for allowing a real share in government to all while reserving a distinct function for each, for providing a system of authoritative guidance which is not allowed to become a code of rules, cannot long be alienated from the sympathies or the support of the English people. Those who seek in the exigencies of the moment to restrict the sphere of the Church's immediate operations and responsibilities, do not abandon all that is noblest in the conception of a national Christianity. They cannot be content with satirizing the Church of England for her title. But they would remove that title so that it may become the standard of a living hope, rather than allow it to remain as the epitaph of an historic failure.

EPILOGUE

AUTHORITY AND REUNION

Our argument must now return to its starting-point. We there remarked that reunion among Christians was the centre of gravity in religious discussion. The problem of reunion raised the problem of authority; and we sketched the different views of authority commonly held, and proceeded by their help to develop what we believe to be the true one. We were thus led to indicate what we hold to be the real principles of Catholicism by which the Church of England ought to reform her stewardship of the Christian mysteries, and to suggest in what way those principles would operate in practice. In result our last chapter closed with what seemed to be a demand for restriction rather than for inclusion. What, then, of reunion? So far we have spoken only about the authority which the Church of England ought to exercise over her own members. How will that authority affect those who are without, whom we so earnestly desire to join with us in building up the Church which is to be?

First, we must notice that an insistence on a definite limitation of membership in the Church does not necessarily conflict with an earnest hope and endeavour after a wider fellowship of Christians than any which Catholicism has so far been able to compass. Those who are most desirous of an inclusive Church sometimes seem to forget that the attempt to include is defeated

by a failure to draw limits at all, at least as surely as by drawing them too narrowly. The greater the variety of human elements which we desire to combine, the surer must we be of the common principles and practices which are to combine them. Again, plans for reunion between certain sects or denominations of Christianity are often essentially narrow in their scope, because their authors have their attention wholly fixed on the needs and demands of the Christian societies directly concerned. They do not seek principles of reunion which might give a hope of really Catholic inclusiveness, and their shortness of vision inclines them to advocate reunion on a very small scale, which, if it were realized, might be, not a help, but a hindrance to those wider schemes which might become practicable in the future. If reunion is our aim, we must take a sufficiently broad view of what reunion means. The principle of a real inclusion should be our guide both in defining limits and in extending their range.

The war should at least enable us to view in a truer and broader perspective the whole problem of religious reunion. Nothing has been more tragic in the history of the war than the failure of organized Christianity to set any effective restraint upon mutual conflict and distrust between Christians of different nations, or to provide Christians of all nations with any common standing-ground from which national concord could be reached. The causes of the mutual estrangement of the nations lie deep in the history of European Christianity. The decay of the mediæval Church led in the Renaissance to the substitution of a purely national for an international ideal of unity. In its best days the Catholic Church had been the visible sacrament of a real unity between nations; she combined peoples of different races, languages, and temperaments in a common faith,

a common worship, and a common ethic, which their variety enriched. But the mediæval Church waxed old; she became intellectually blind and morally corrupt. She merely opposed herself to the new learning and moral fervour of the Renaissance; and in return the Renaissance cast off, not only the shackles of her tyranny, but also the bonds of her fellowship. The nation ousted the Church as the visible centre of human loyalty. The Church herself became nationalized; she came to be looked upon as the guardian of the spiritual side of the nation's life rather than as the representative of a fellowship which is in principle international. Thus Europe forsook the true line of spiritual growth.

At the beginning of the war the question was frequently heard, "How would an ideally Christian nation act in the situation which now confronts England?" However it be answered, the question itself suggests another, "How far can the Christian society be ideally represented in a single nation?" From the Christian point of view the nation as such suffers from an inherent incompleteness as a social unit. The true type of society is formed essentially by a combination of unlikes which by mutual service supply each other's needs. Such is the ideal family formed through marriage, wherein the contribution of each member to the whole is determined by his difference from the others. Such, to some extent, is the ideal nation wherein different classes or sections of society co-operate for the good of all. Nevertheless the unity of a nation is fundamentally constituted by the likeness of its members, i.e. the fact that they all belong to the same race and therefore exhibit a certain identity of character. The nation is made up of people who, because they are like each other, want the same things, not of those who,

because they are unlike each other, can supply each other's needs. The national society lacks that essential union of unlikes which constitutes marriage and is the foundation on which the family rests. Therefore an unrestrained nationalism is essentially selfish; the nation is no true pattern of organic unity, and to leave it as the ultimate object of social loyalty is to cause mankind to err. No doubt the rights of nations must be safeguarded, so that each may develop the national character which is needed for the service of all. But if the end of loyalty to the nation is simply the assertion of the national self, rather than the dedication of its powers to the service of a larger and more perfect community, then the national life itself becomes an evil thing, opposed to the essential ideal for which Christianity stands. The ultimate human loyalty must be due to something which deserves the name of a family of nations. It seems almost as if the nation were an extension of the individual self, whereas the Catholic Church ought to be an extension of the family.

The fact that in this war we stood for the rights of small nations ought not to blind us to the truth, that national independence is at best a proximate, not an ultimate, ideal. National independence means the assertion of the right of those who belong to the same race to determine their action as they please. Ideal freedom means the enabling of those who belong to different races to make their contribution to the common good. National independence is an essential means to freedom, for service not freely given is only servitude. But when regarded as an end in itself, national independence produces simply that anarchy of national selfishness which has been the cause of our undoing. A thoroughgoing nationalism which recog-

nizes no allegiance beyond the nation, and an imperialism which imposes the rule of one nation upon others, merely represent the old delusions of anarchy and tyranny which can provide no peace worthy of the name.

It is therefore very widely recognized that in some form of international association lies the only hope for the future of mankind. The capacities of Socialism and of a League of Nations to create the necessary links are on every side subjects of discussion. Yet from the Christian point of view both methods of union, however valuable, are manifestly incomplete. Socialism, when it means the rule of Labour, tries to substitute the universal rule of one class for the rule of one nation. But a class, more obviously than a nation, represents a unity of likes ; it is a section of society unified by the identical interests of those who compose it. Loyalty to a class therefore, if regarded as ultimate, is quite as viciously selfish as loyalty to a nation, and must lead to strife as bitter and as disastrous. On the other hand, a League of Nations seems to offer at best an insecure cohesion. Its maintenance depends on a balance of force in case of disagreement. In such a league it is hoped that the attempt of any one member to assert his will over the others must necessarily unite the others against him, and ultimately the power possessed by the many will restrain the self-assertion of the one. The necessary balance of force will presumably be secured in the first instance by an agreed limitation of armaments, and without it no system of arbitration can really avail. A league resting on such foundations might place effective obstacles in the path of aggression ; but obviously it contains in itself no surer guarantee of permanent peace than the old balance of power which maintained such

unstable equilibrium in the nineteenth century. At best a League of Nations is a hindrance to war, and will give time for the forging of stronger links of unity. It may delay a further catastrophe until a real spirit of fellowship removes the spiritual causes from which aggression springs.

If, then, political measures, now that the war is over, do obstruct another outburst of hostility, how can Christianity best use the opportunity so afforded to sow the seed of a genuinely international fellowship? Political measures may protect the growth of such seed until it comes to maturity; but peace can only be secure when the harvest is reaped. How can the Church with the surest faith and hope do her part in the sowing? Only when this all-important question dominates our minds can the reunion of Churches be profitably discussed. We must start from the frank admission that in the past three different conceptions of the Church's unity have been alike in their utter failure to promote concord among nations.

(1) The Papacy has failed. The failure may not be inherent in the conception of the Church which Papacy represents, but at least the fact of the failure is conspicuous. The Roman Catholicism of Germany, Austria, Italy, France, Britain, and Ireland has not prevented Roman Catholics in all these countries from being guided in their views and conduct by the public opinion of their nation quite as completely as the vast mass of their fellow-citizens. Their Catholicism has not led them to take any more detached view of national aims and national hostilities. The Vatican itself has only maintained its international authority by rigidly refraining from any moral judgment upon the essential merits of the causes in which the combatants are fighting. It has been compelled to construe

"impartiality" as forbidding it to pronounce either side right or wrong upon the main issue, not as enabling it to deliver a detached judgment based on Christian principles. The reason for this abstention is obvious and may even, in all the circumstances, be valid. The Vatican could not express any more definite opinion without alienating from allegiance to itself its adherents on one side or the other. Thus its silence is an eloquent witness that in supreme decisions as to public right and wrong individual Roman Catholics are, like their neighbours, swayed by a purely national patriotism.

(2) The theory of national Churches has failed. At the time of the Reformation there were many who desired each State to be in entire control of its ecclesiastical as well as of its political affairs; they looked upon the organization of the Church as an institution maintained and directed by the State for the spiritual welfare of its citizens. Events have shown that the established church of a nation must in any acute controversy almost invariably identify itself with the nation's cause. It is notorious that in Germany the Lutheran Church has served as an instrument employed by the secular power to give spiritual sanction to the policy and claims of the Government. The lesson which Englishmen learnt when men like Harnack supported the war policy of the Prussian, is one not lightly to be forgotten. On the other hand, it is easy to exaggerate the extent to which the Church of England allies herself with a purely national patriotism. Individual independence among the clergy is practically unrestricted as regards all political questions, and causes unpopular among the people often find champions in the pulpit. Moreover, the corporate help which the Church has undoubtedly tried to render to the

national Government during the past years of struggle and suspense has certainly been the fruit of a compelling conviction that on the whole the nation was trying to range itself on the side of God. Yet undeniably the vast mass of the Church of England's laity has always been identified with the narrowly patriotic and conservative elements in the English State. Whatever be our view of the merits of the Boer War, it must be admitted that the righteousness of the nation's cause was at that time open to suspicion; yet the Church's influence was then used on the side of the Government almost as whole-heartedly as it is to-day. Even in the present struggle the Church's voice has not been clearly raised in protest against the Secret Treaties, or in a demand that the nation should clear itself before the world of any suspicion of aiming at its own aggrandizement or of desiring to found a world-dominion of its own upon the ruins of the enemy's ambition. On the whole, the facts seem to show that a national Church fails in bearing witness to the supra-national principles of fellowship which are the life of Catholic Christianity.

(3) The theory of the purely spiritual Church has failed. Many Nonconformists and Independents have preached the unimportance of outward things. They have told us that questions of Church organization and Church government were matters of comparatively small concern, which ought in no case to be made canons of Catholicity. It is far better, they said, to allow Christians to join together voluntarily in any form of outward association which suits their various opinions, and not to ask for an external Catholicism until all Christian societies and denominations have together grown unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Meanwhile the best kind of unity

which Christians can seek is simply an agreement between different societies to live and let live and to sink controversy in mutual recognition and respect. Again, the essential weakness of this doctrine is now apparent. Human nature is so constituted that for the many loyalty to a visible and organized society will always take precedence of one which is due solely to a spiritual ideal. Independency inevitably brings it to pass that religious loyalties, in so far as they are outward at all, have a much narrower range even than national loyalties, since they are given to associations comprising only a small fraction of the citizens of one State. Independency provides no outward international loyalty for Christians, and the international spiritual loyalty is not sufficient to bridge the dividing gulfs which outward national loyalties create.

In the future the Christianity of Europe and of the world must develop along one of three different lines: either (1) it must submit to the Pope, who, after all, is the visible head of the only really international Church which at the present moment exists; or (2) it must devote all its efforts to penetrating with a spiritual leaven the life of separate nations, and wait until an international Christianity grows out of the inward unity which may thus be gradually evolved; or (3) it must aim boldly at the restoration of some outward object of Catholic loyalty, more inclusive than the loyalty now demanded by the Pope, which will enable Christians everywhere, through common allegiance to a visible organization, to exert a definite influence upon the development of international politics. This latter plan has at least this advantage over the other two, that it has not yet been tried, and therefore has no record of past failure behind it.

Reunion among Christians ought always to be dis-

cussed in relation to the fundamental problem which the consideration of these three possibilities suggests. Surely it is a somewhat tragic irony that, while in the political sphere discussions of future unity aim at producing at least a new comity of European nations, in the religious sphere the term reunion too often denotes merely a possibility that certain denominations of English Christianity may contrive some form of coalition. The whole moral of the war is a truly appalling lesson in the need for international association. Can the association of religious bodies confine itself to a further unifying of the Christian forces comprised within the English nation? No doubt the latter problem is intensely pressing and important. We must not be the victims of a megalomania which, while professing to fix its eyes on a distant goal, is too blind to take the first steps towards it. Even in a day of great things small things must never be despised. But smaller things must be considered in relation to the larger. For instance, the retention by the Church of England of the historic Orders and Sacraments of the Church means, both in historic fact and in future promise, the maintenance of an international organization of Catholicism. To abandon these essential links with a Christian internationalism of the past in order to promote a unity of merely English Christians, might well be to sacrifice a greater to a smaller reunion; it might be a retrograde step towards that very separateness of nations which the world-war has once for all condemned before the world's conscience. We must entreat our Nonconformist brethren not to imagine that when Anglicans cling to the Apostolic Succession or to the ancient form and doctrine of the Eucharist, they are merely seeking to vindicate the rightness of Anglicanism against the errors of Nonconformity.

Rather what the stricter school of English Catholicism looks for is the possibility of restoring an international Christianity to which all Christians may contribute. It desires with passionate earnestness that a new Church should arise in England into which every English denomination should bring the fullness of its characteristic gift. It may be that the Anglican contribution will be mainly in outward things—the historic Orders in their authorized succession, the celebration of Sacraments in historic form. If so, those forms will need a double measure of the spirit of Nonconformity to make them live afresh as means of spiritual grace. If the Nonconformists are thus to minister to Anglicans in spiritual things, is it intolerable to them that they should receive the ministration of Anglicans in outward things? Anglicans desire to retain the historic framework of an international Christianity, so that it may once again offer inclusion, not to English Nonconformists only, but also to those Christians of other nations, whom it once united in the past.

The great problem of the international organization of Christianity ought to be the governing consideration in all discussions of reunion; and our attitude to it will obviously be determined in great measure by our theological belief as to the nature of the Church. Theologically, the question which has first to be answered is whether the Church is in the essence a sacramental or else purely spiritual society. Is the unity of the Church a unity of spiritual fellowship alone, or is it a spiritual unity manifesting itself through an appointed unity of form?

If the Catholic Church is a spiritual fellowship only, then no external forms or rules of Christian association have any paramount authority. Full outward unity

remains strictly a future hope, only to be reached when human society as a whole has come to the goal of its perfection. In this case to expect that any outward loyalty to one authoritative Church will play an essential part in healing the breaches between the nations is a theological mistake; it is a radical misconception of the true method of Christianity in the redemption of the world. But in that case also the primary and urgent need for outward reunion among Christians disappears. Let every variety of Christian community continue to make its converts, retain its distinct and independent organization, and trust simply to the Christian spirit to produce the ultimate unity for which we long.

It may be that, even on this hypothesis, some League or Federation of Churches is now desirable, in which each Christian body retains its autonomy and separate organization, but sends delegates to some central council, which would deal with questions affecting the whole league. But obviously such federation differs in its whole scope and purpose from strict reunion. Reunion means the restoration of one communion and fellowship, outward and inward alike, and the outward as a means to the inward. Federation means essentially the retention of independent divided units, which, in view of practical needs, agree to limit in some degree the full and rightful claim of each to independence, in order to be able for certain restricted purposes to act together.

But if the Catholic Church is essentially the sacrament—i.e. the outward sign, means, and pledge—of the mystical unity of the Body of Christ, then our whole attitude to reunion will be changed. In this case there can be but one true outward Church on earth, and its unity must have its fixed and appointed form. The essence of a sacrament is the action of a spiritual

power through a fixed outward medium. The constant, unvarying nature of the outward form is the *pledge* of the constant operation of the Spirit Who uses it. Thus the outward unity of the Church on earth is not only the final product of the unity of the spiritual Body of Christ, but is actually the appointed means* through which the spiritual unity has from the beginning worked and declared itself. Hence, on this hypothesis, the outward forms of the Church's unity cannot be the new creations of the present or of the future ; they must have been appointed from the beginning, and they can never have been utterly lost. These forms ought to overpass all boundaries of national distinction, and to destroy those of sectarian division ; they must have been appointed universally as signs and seals of a fellowship, in which male and female, Jew and Gentile, Englishman and German, are one. To restore these forms as real marks of a spiritual unity is an immediate duty of all Christian believers, and we may trust that a sacramental Church, thus once more inclusively united, may form a stronger bond of peace between the nations than that which the mediæval Papacy allowed to break. Obviously, if such be our conception of the Church's task and nature, the divisions in her body can be nothing but a source of shame to her members. But inevitably, also, two conclusions follow : (1) The existence of wholly independent, self-governing communities of Christians, recognizing no common definable unity of faith, order, and worship, is utterly wrong, and to assist in the perpetuation of such independent " Churches " is to be involved in the guilt of schism. (2) Reunion cannot spring from an ignoring or a further breach of the outward forms wherein the sacramental sign of the

* The *appointed* means is not of course the *only* means.

Church's unity consists. The very task of reunion is to define these forms more clearly and to mark them more strongly, in order that they may more effectively bind together the different types of individual and national character which are meant to glorify God together in His Church.

First, then, it is the duty of English Christians to make up their minds whether they are prepared to hold to the sacramental conception of the Catholic Church. If they are, their aims in the international organization of Christianity will differ radically from those suggested by current proposals for a "League of Churches." As a temporary expedient they may indeed, on certain conditions, support the formation of such a league. But they will regard it as a temporary expedient only; they will be constantly trying to remove the need for it; they will utterly dissociate themselves from it the moment it appears to be acting as a substitute or alternative for the full reunion which they desire to create. For example, the practice of "intercommunion," if it be once recognized, is only too likely to lead to a fatal acquiescence in the absence of the one communion, apart from which the sacramental Church cannot exist. The very necessity for the barbarous and almost nonsensical term "intercommunion" reveals the essential wrongness of the practice. The sacramental Church knows one communion only, and if at present one communion is impossible, it is better to recognize the sad fact frankly, until it can be removed, than to achieve an apparent unification, which could only be a cloak for schism.

Next, assuming that the Church of England holds to the sacramental conception of the Church, what immediate action can she take to promote the real reunion for which she longs? Surely her first task must be to

declare plainly what she believes to be the essential outward marks of the sacramental unity which she desires to restore. It is by no means clear that the Lambeth Quadrilateral represents a satisfactory statement on this subject, or that the Church of England as a whole is prepared to adhere to it. Objection to a really clear and authoritative statement probably springs from the fear that further definition may create more schism than it heals, and may further restrict the Church's already weakened hold even on the English nation. Yet, even if the fear should seem to be justified by the immediate result, the restriction may be inevitable in the cause of the wider unity which we have at heart. By showing the world that she stands for what is in principle a truly inclusive and international Catholicism, the Church of England may, even through the reduction of her numerical membership, reach out a hand to Continental Catholics on the one side and to Protestants on the other, and by throwing off the rule of a national government make herself free to act as a mediator through whom the Christianity of different nations may in the end be brought into a restored communion. At the present moment the Church of England retains historic forms of Catholicism, which other Reformed Communions have abandoned, while at the same time she is certainly free from that excess of outward definition which by this time has made it wellnigh impossible for Rome to initiate a radical reform. Surely it would be folly for the Church of England to fling away, in the interests of a purely English policy, the international opportunity which her unique position gives her.

As regards Rome, it will, of course, be argued—and argued very naturally—that the Vatican is now constitutionally unable to abate one jot of its demands, and

that therefore there can never be any approach to it save complete submission. But we have yet to see what new movements, even in Rome herself, the present upheaval will produce. And in any case, if we really believe in the sacramental unity of the Church, we have no right to sacrifice the principles of our belief because we do not see at the moment the practical advantage of adhering to them. If we hold that Rome has erred from true Catholicism in one direction, we are not therefore justified in erring from it ourselves in another.

Meanwhile undoubtedly the immediate hope of reunion lies in an approach towards the Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and other denominations of British Christianity. Many Scottish Presbyterians and English Nonconformists feel no less strongly than ourselves the imperative need for some healing of the breaches which vex the conscience of the Christian and provoke the taunts of the unbeliever. They are most anxious to meet us in the discussion of practical terms on which some form of outward unity might be reached. We owe it to their desire for reunion, so honestly and cordially expressed, that we should declare plainly how far we are able to go in accommodating ourselves to their demands, and why perhaps we cannot go to the full length of their present wishes.

English Churchmen must frankly recognize that one chief obstacle to the restoration of outward unity is their own failure to agree among themselves as to the conditions on which that restoration is possible. It may be Utopian to imagine that if the Church of England were to make clear the true breadth and firmness of the Catholicism to which she holds, other Christian bodies might join with her in forming a reunited communion, which would be an earnest of a

still greater restoration; yet signs are not wanting that the possibility is a real one. Many Wesleyans and Presbyterians, for instance, really agree even with the "Catholic" school of Anglicanism on nearly all essential points of faith and practice, except the one question of Orders; and perhaps agreement on this point, too, is only deferred until the Church of England states clearly what her doctrine is.

Meanwhile progress is checked until the Church can speak with authority in her own name. At the present moment unauthorized action on the part of individuals or sections can only serve to prejudice discussion and put fresh difficulties in the way of any united declaration by the Church of England as a whole. Obviously the chance of unity will be reduced to vanishing-point, if, when the representative assemblies of the self-governing Church meet for the first time with power to act in the Church's name, parties on either side have already so far committed themselves by previous action, that no room for mutual concession is left. At the moment, therefore, the decisive action of English Churchmen should be confined to a vigorous campaign for the freedom which will give the Church power to speak and act for herself. The use to which that freedom shall be put is at present a subject for discussion only, discussion as thorough and frank as a full sense of the tremendous issues involved can make it. Above all, let us not despise the debating and canvassing of theories. In truth the Church of England is perishing for want of theory. Her failures in practice are the outcome of her failure to define and to follow her principles.

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